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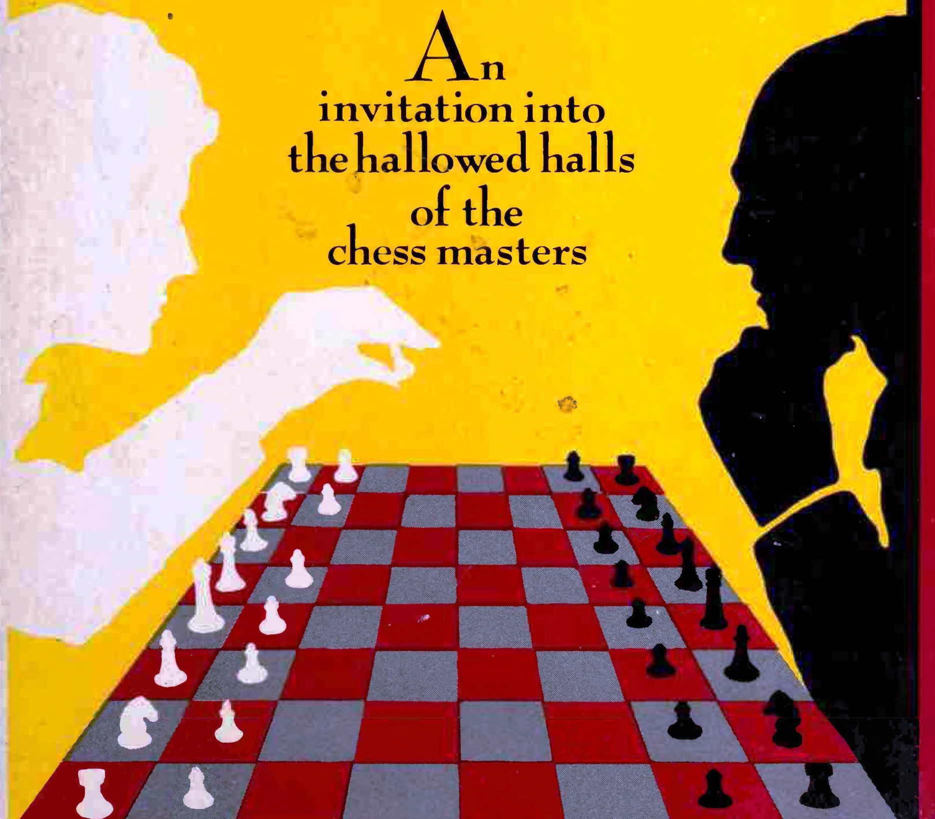
CHESS PANORAMA

William Lombardy & David Daniels

An invitation into the hallowed halls of the chess masters



"Will give you a lot of pleasure"—*The Chess Reader*

CHESS
PANORAMA

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WILLIAM LOMBARDY
INTERNATIONAL GRANDMASTER
and
DAVID DANIELS

A SCARBOROUGH BOOK
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Introduction

Of the countless millions of people throughout the world who play chess, few take the game at all seriously. To most it is just another pastime, like Monopoly or Go Fish, that helps to pass the idle hours after dinner, or on a rainy afternoon. For these casual players, once they have defeated, or are defeated by, their adversary of the moment—a friend, perhaps, or a relative—chess will have no further significance: the pieces will be put back in the box and the set away on the shelf, not to be taken down again until the next time there is nothing better to do. For them the configurations formed by the little wooden figures they push about while at play have no meaning beyond the confines of the checkered board on which they take shape.

Up until very recently, even in an age when the mass media could bring news of events taking place all over the world into every living room (or mud hut, tent and igloo, for that matter), most people who played chess were but dimly aware that others played too, and that some took the game very seriously indeed. Then, in the summer of 1972, when Boris Spassky and Bobby Fischer were locked in combat in their world championship match in Reykjavik, Iceland, journalists from many nations converged on the scene. The match received unprecedented coverage in the press, on radio, and on television; as a result people who had before that time not known that there was such a creature as the world chess champion now followed the fortunes of the protagonists from day to day, and discussed their chances of success with their husbands or wives over the breakfast table, their comrades at work, and their friends over pints of beer at the local pub. Many to whom chess was previously the most casual of leisure-time activities discovered that knowing the moves of the game made them members of an international fraternity which, however loosely organized, helped in some measure to unite them with others whose language they did not speak, and with whom they had little more in common.

And for some, the enthusiasm generated by the match had a more immediate effect as well. They not only began to follow chess news more closely, but began to regard their own play with new interest. Some who had before barely known how the pieces moved bought books and began to study the finer points of strategy and tactics. Some who had played more or less regularly in youth began again in earnest in middle age. The rolls of chess clubs swelled, in some instances beyond the capacities of the club's quarters to accommodate the newcomers. More and more chess books were published, sold, and read. Many more people entered tournaments at local, regional, and even national levels. The Spassky-Fischer match, in short, inaugurated a new era in the history of chess.

Despite the inevitable falling away of those who were discouraged by their slow progress at what is, after all, a difficult game to play well, interest in chess has continued to grow rapidly in the years since the match. The gap that separates the casual from the serious chess players has been crossed in ever increasing numbers—in a sense, anyone who has ceased to think of his own play in isolation and to acknowledge that he is a member of the international fraternity of chess players has crossed that gap. And yet there is another gap—one much wider and more formidable—that still separates those for whom chess may have become an enthusiasm, or even a passion, but the principal thrust of whose lives is in another direction, and those few players for whom it is both a livelihood and a vital form of intellectual expression. The vast majority even of serious chess players will never have the opportunity to participate in a first-class national or international tournament, and play in such events must remain for them to a certain extent *terra incognita.* This book will explore some of that territory, to describe in part what happens when some of the world's strongest players meet in competition, and provide some kind of background against which the printed scores of the games they play can be viewed.

Although the game of chess is thought by scholars to have originated in the sixth century, the first tournament, as we understand the word, did not take place until 1851. Our earliest records of chess are from India, where some anonymous genius seems to have invented a game to simulate, in all its details, the clash of two armies on the field of battle (the Indian name of the new game, *chaturanga,* means the four branches of the army). It made its way thence along the well-traveled caravan routes to Persia, and when Persia was conquered by the Moslems in the seventh century chess was one of the spoils of war.

The Arabs thought highly of the game, and it traveled in the baggage trains of the armies that conquered much of the known world over the following three centuries. In this way, sometime before the year 1000, chess entered Europe, and gradually became so popular with the nobility of the Christian countries that it acquired the epithet by which it is still sometimes known: the Royal Game.

Its place, along with hunting, hawking, and *amour courtois,* in the life of the European nobility caused it to retain for centuries its associations with the highest classes of society. Although it was hardly the exclusive possession of the nobility even in the Middle Ages—remember the sailors of the Tristan legend who lure the lad aboard their ship by enticing him to play chess with them?—knowledge of the game was usually regarded as a courtly attribute, and proficiency at chess remained for many centuries one of the marks of a gentleman. There were professional players, to be sure, both in the Arab world and in the Christian, but they were of the same social class as wandering minstrels or artisans, and relied for their livelihoods on the patronage of the wealthy. With the growing popularity of coffeehouses in the eighteenth century and after, the professional player could also earn a precarious income in them, taking on all comers for small stakes.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, however, most of the best English players were gentlemen, or regarded themselves as such. Thus the assembly of European chess talent organized by the St. George's Chess Club of London in 1851, in informal conjuncture with the Great Exposition at the Crystal Palace, was envisioned as a meeting of gentlemen amateurs. Its origin was a desire to bring about a congress of European players to codify the rules of the game, which still varied in certain details from country to country. The tournament—so called by analogy with the medieval institution in which armored knights clashed in mock combat—played at the same time and won by Adolf Anderssen of Germany, was almost an afterthought.

This first tournament, despite difficulties due to the inevitable inexperience of the organizers, was judged a success, and similar events became increasingly frequent over the following years. In 1886 two of the world's top players, Wilhelm Steinitz of Austria and Johannes Hermann Zuckertort of Prussia, played a match intended, they announced, to decide the chess championship of the world. Steinitz won, and the widespread recognition by the public of his right to the title signaled the beginning of the championship as it exists today.

Despite the foundation, in 1924, of a world chess organization (the Féderation Internationale des Échecs, commonly abbreviated FIDE) the championship was regarded from its beginnings until 1946 as the personal property of the champion. This led to many abuses: champions would remain inactive for long periods and set impossible conditions for matches against challengers they did not wish to meet. The difficulty of raising money for chess events not only deprived many worthy players of opportunities to contend for the crown but rendered matches for the title less frequent than was good for the growth of the game.

In 1946 the reigning titleholder, Alexander Alekhine, died, and FIDE was finally able to secure control of the title. A tournament was held, won by Mikhail Botvinnik of the Soviet Union, to determine Alekhine's successor, and a system established whereby a challenger would emerge periodically against whom the champion would have to contest a match, or forfeit his title.

This system, which is today the bedrock on which rests the superstructure of international chess, works roughly as follows: the world is divided into zones, and in the first year of the three-year cycle a tournament is held in each zone. The top players in each zonal tournament then proceed to a tournament of worldwide scope called the interzonal, and the first six finishers in the interzonal are designated challengers, or candidates. These players join with the loser of the previous world championship match and the runner-up in the previous candidates' competition, in contesting a series of matches, out of which a single challenger to the reigning champion eventually emerges. Champion and challenger meet in the third year of the cycle in a match for the championship itself, by which time the zonal tournaments at the start of the next cycle have already begun.

In addition to its responsibility for the world championship cycle, FIDE is also active in promoting other international events, such as the biennial Chess Olympics, a huge tournament of four-man teams representing their respective nations, the junior world championship, the women's world championship, and others. FIDE is also responsible for awarding international chess titles, such as those of international master and grandmaster, to players who have met the elaborate standards of qualification.

Title competition, although it is the most glamorous form of chess activity and the one that attracts the most attention in the press, is far from the only high level chess played in the world. Many tournaments, organized by local clubs or national federations, are played annually, and a European chess circuit, not unlike the professional golf or tennis tours in the United States and abroad, is followed by professional players from many countries of the world. In addition, tournaments are held frequently in South America, the United States, and even the Far East. With the growth in the popularity of chess over the past few years, the number of tournaments has greatly increased, and so has the number of technical publications, journals, and books intended to enable interested persons to keep track of the latest developments in chess theory.

Although the different circumstances that exist throughout the chess world make it difficult to generalize, the following composite picture of how a typical chess tournament is organized is reasonably accurate. It usually starts with a group of enthusiastic chess players—members of the same club, say. One day they decide that it would be fun to watch a group of famous players in action at first hand, and that to organize a first-class tournament would bring prestige to their club and city. They form a committee, raise funds, usually by solicitations of wealthy fellow members and local businesses, and, the finances arranged, send letters of invitation to the players they wish to invite. Invitations are extended either directly to the players or by way of their national chess federations. (In America the U.S. Chess Federation handles most of the paperwork.) In addition, some number of local players, usually about a quarter of the proposed field, are invited to test their skill against the foreign visitors.

Because the prospect of new international titles for those who score well depends on the category of the tournament, which in turn depends on the number of players who already have titles who are competing, special care is exerted to ensure that the event contains as many grandmasters and international masters as possible. The caliber of the players attracted depends, of course, on the amount of the prize fund.

After a sufficient number of good players have been assembled, play begins under the watchful eye of an official called the tournament director, whose responsibility it is to see that the event is conducted according to the laws of chess and the reasonable wishes of the players. It is he who, with the aid of a players' committee, arbitrates all disputes, makes certain that the playing conditions are satisfactory, and, in short, sees that things run as smoothly as possible. His task is far from an easy one, as subsequent chapters of this book will make clear.

For those who have never seen a major chess tournament a brief description of the players at work may prove helpful. The event is usually held in a theater or large hall, with the players seated at tables up on a stage or in an area otherwise reserved for competitors and officials. The audience will be seated close enough to the players so that they can see them squirming in their chairs, and sometimes disturb their concentration with unnecessary noise (they will be hushed by the indignant stare of the tournament director), but not close enough to see the configurations of pieces on the chessboards. To make up for this, wallboards (like huge chess diagrams with movable pieces) will be posted on the walls behind the players, and the moves of each game duplicated on them.

The atmosphere of a chess tournament in progress is tense, with the players locked in grim combat and the audience straining their own powers in order to anticipate what moves will be played next in the various games. Tension—the tension of top-class chess—is a recurring theme throughout this book, and it is this tension that serves to separate tournament play from casual chess. It helps to make an international chess tournament a little world in itself—and it's this world that will spring to life in the pages that follow.

I

Enter Laughing

"All the world's a stage," says the melancholy Jacques in Shakespeare's *As You Like It,* "and all the men and women merely players." But "Jacques," the scholars tell us, is pronounced "Jakes," and a jakes in Elizabethan English is a chamberpot.

The world of international chess is literally a stage, or some kind of raised platform. The players have their exits and their entrances, and some of them—the entrances, especially—are rich in drama. This is the story of how some few players rise from the obscurity of their local chess clubs into national and international prominence. In other words, we'll assemble a cast of characters for the tragicomedy to follow.

Unfortunately, some of the best stories are too well known to bear elaborate retelling here. A favorite motif from the early days is that of the young American, unknown to European chess circles, when visitors from across the sea were regarded with mingled condescension and disdain, coming ashore in the Old World to take the measure of the best players that decadent civilization had to offer. The tale has all the characteristics of a bad fiction prompted by an American sense of inferiority in the face of European sophistication; something that might have been penned by a far cruder Henry James. Nevertheless, this improbable adventure actually happened, and no fewer than three times (four, if you count Bobby Fischer's equally improbable rise to fame): with Paul Morphy and his European *Wanderjahren* of 1858–59, with Harry Nelson Pillsbury and his great victory in the Hastings tournament of 1895 (his first international event), and with José Raoul Capablanca.

Capablanca (1888–1942), still regarded by many as the most talented player of all time, learned the game at the age of four through watching his father play, gained a reputation in his native Cuba as a child prodigy, and, while a high school and university student in the United States, recognition as a full-fledged master. In 1911 he was invited, on the strength of a match victory he had gained over American champion Frank J. Marshall, to play in the international tournament held that year at San Sebastian. This event, the first modern international tournament ever held on Spanish soil, was limited to players who had won at least two third prizes in top-class tournaments. "An exception was made in respect to me," writes Capablanca in his book *My Chess Career*, "because of my victory over Marshall. Some of the masters objected to my entry before this clause was known. One of them was Dr. Bernstein. I had the good fortune to play him in the first round, and beat him in such fashion as to obtain the Rothschild prize for the most brilliant game of the tournament."

The game has been published in many places, but those with a taste for fairy tales might like to see it again.

RUY LOPEZ

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Capablanca	Bernstein	Capablanca	Bernstein
1 P-K4	P-K4	3 B-N5	N-B3
2 N-KB3	N-QB3	4 0-0	B-K2

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Capablanca	Bernstein	Capablanca	Bernstein
5 N-B3	P-Q3	21 P-KB3	N-K3
6 BxNch	PxB	22 N/4-K2	QxP
7 P-Q4	PxP	23 N/2-N3	QxBP
8 NxP	B-Q2	24 R-QB1	Q-N7
9 B-N5	O-O	25 N-R5	R-KR1
10 R-K1	P-KR3	26 R-K2	Q-K4
11 B-R4	N-R2	27 P-B4	Q-N4
12 BxB	QxB	28 N/B5xNP	N-B4
13 Q-Q3	QR-N1	29 NxR	BxN
14 P-QN3	N-N4	30 Q-QB3	P-B3
15 QR-Q1	Q-K4	31 NxPch	K-N3
16 Q-K3	N-K3	32 N-R5	R-N1
17 N/3-K2	Q-QR4	33 P-B5ch	K-N4
18 N-B5	N-B4	34 Q-K3ch	K-R5
19 N/2-Q4	K-R2	35 Q-N3ch	K-N4
20 P-KN4	QR-K1	36 P-R4 mate	

As this story implies, Capablanca's rise to the top (he won the San Sebastian tournament, of course) was astonishing, even though Pillsbury's earlier success at Hastings had provided some sort of precedent. In the early years of the century chess organization was still, by modern standards, primitive, but even then the usual way to gain entrance into masters' tournaments was to win a succession of prizes in smaller competitions. The Germans were the first to formulate a system through which players could earn the master's title, which then served as a kind of union card to secure them admittance to international events. The Germans frequently held huge congresses where many tournaments were played under the same roof, from an international tournament at the center of attention to events for novices around the perimeters. The aim of every ambitious European amateur was to earn a place in a so-called *Hauptturnier* (freely translated "candidates' tournament"). A *Hauptturnier* was held at every major congress, and the winner designated a master of the German Chess

Federation. Some of the best players in chess history, such as Dr. Siegbert Tarrasch and Dr. Emanuel Lasker, worked their way up through the ranks and finally secured their master's titles in a *Hauptturnier* of this kind. Once a player attained the rank of master, invitations to international events were relatively easy to come by.

The love of drama that afflicts chess journalists from time to time has served to shroud the entrances of some strong players onto the stage of international competition with an aura of romance. The story of Akiba Rubinstein's rise to prominence is a case in point; here is the version narrated by Richard Réti* in his book *Modern Ideas in Chess:*

> The following story of his youth, which is characteristic, was told me by a chess votary who hailed from Lodz. Rubinstein went to Lodz as a young Talmudic student. He appeared one day in the Chess Café where Salwe was then undisputed master. Rubinstein selected an opponent from amongst the non-aggressive players who received the odds of a rook; and Rubinstein was one of the weakest of them. For a long time he continued to be a regular patron of that Café and was in the habit, during that period, of playing chess, showing a great passion for the game without making any notable progress in it. There came a time, however, when his visits ceased: he remained away some weeks. But on the day he returned to the Café he went straight up to Salwe and offered to play him there and then. The unexpected happened. Rubinstein was victorious and remained from that day next to Salwe, the strongest player in Lodz.

This story could be true, despite the existence of other versions that give the period of Rubinstein's Talmudic seclusion as three months, or six. It would have happened in 1903 or 1904. But the point is that Rubinstein still needed to go through the required period of apprenticeship before he could gain recognition as a master. He earned his title in the *Hauptturnier* held at the congress in Barmen in 1905, in which he tied for first place with the young Czech Oldrich Duras. (Future grandmaster Saviely Tartakower also participated at Barmen; he won first prize in a lower section, designated as Group II of *Hauptturnier* B. This victory secured him admission to the highest of the *Hauptturniers* at the following congress—a slight indication of how complicated and rigorous the system was.

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*The story of Réti's own debut in international chess is in the nature of an antiromance. When at the last minute one of the foreign entrants dropped out of the huge Vienna tournament of 1908, Réti, one of the strongest of the local players, was asked to step in to fill the place. He scored one and a half points (three draws) out of nineteen games, and was so discouraged that he almost quit chess entirely. Fortunately he persevered, to become one of the most original thinkers in the history of the game.

To give an idea of the caliber of play at these events, we present below Rubinstein's game with Fritz Englund from the Barmen *Hauptturnier*. Englund finished in eighth place in this event, and later went on to participate, with some success, in international competition.

FRENCH DEFENSE

	White	*Black*
	Englund	Rubinstein
1	P-K4	P-K3
2	P-Q4	P-Q4
3	PxP	PxP
4	B-Q3	N-KB3?!
5	N-QB3	B-Q3
6	B-KN5	P-B3
7	N-B3	O-O
8	O-O	B-KN5
9	P-KR3	B-R4
10	N-K2!?	BxN
11	PxB	QN-Q2
12	K-R1	Q-B2
13	Q-Q2	N-R4
14	R-KN1	P-KB4
15	B-R6	P-B5
16	R-N5	N/2-B3
17	QR-K N1	K-R1
18	BxPch	NxB
19	RxN	QxR
20	RxQ	KxR
21	NxP	BxN
22	QxB	R-B2
23	B-B5	R-K1
24	P-N3	R/2-K2
25	B-Q3	R-K8ch
26	K-R2	R/1-K2
27	P-QR4	R-Q8
28	Q-N5ch	K-B2
29	Q-R6	R-K3
30	Q-B4	R/3-K8
31	Q-B7ch	R-K2
32	Q-N8	P-QR3
33	KN2	R/8-K8
34	Q-B4	K-N2

White	*Black*
Englund	Rubinstein
35 Q-N5ch	K-B2
36 Q-R6	K-K3
37 P-KB4	R-KB2
38 P-KB3	K-Q2
39 K-B2	R/8-K2
40 P-B4	R-K1
41 P-QB5	R/1-K2
42 P-N4	R-K1
43 P-N5	RPxP
44 PxP	K-K2
45 PxP	PxP
46 P-B5	R-QR1
47 Q-K3ch	K-B1
48 Q-K6	R-R7ch
49 K-N3	R-Q7
50 B-R6?	RxP
51 QxBP	K-N2
52 Q-Q6	R-Q7
53 P-B6?	N-R4ch
54 K-R4	R-Q4ch
55 K-N5	N-B3!
Resigns	

The elaborate German chess organization was a casualty of the First World War, and there existed nothing comparable until the Russians began to organize their own chess players on a grand scale in the 1920's. An important difference between the two systems, however, was that the German one was European in scope—foreigners could, and often did, compete successfully in *Hauptturniers*—while the Russian was intended exclusively for home use. The extent of the effort exerted by the Soviet government may be gauged through statistics: in 1922 there were about 1,000 officially registered players throughout the Soviet Union, in 1929 there were 150,000, and in 1934 about half a million (in 1966, according to an official census, the number had climbed to 3,540,000).

The Russian program included a series of tournaments for the national title that begins on a local level and progresses through regional and national stages before culminating in the annual Soviet championship tournament, and also a grading system that divides all active players into categories. To progress on the Soviet grading list it is necessary to compete successfully in tournaments against players of the next higher grade: for a third-category player, say, to enter the second category, he must make a certain score (fixed by formula) in an event in which a requisite number of second-category players are taking part.

The highest rank on the grading list below the master level is that of candidate master. In the original system (now somewhat modified) it was usually necessary, in order for a candidate master to earn the master's title, that he win a match against a recognized master. Typical of these matches is the one in 1954 in which the young Latvian player Mikhail Tal secured his title by defeating the Belorussian master Vladimir Saigin. The final score was 8–6; the following game indicates the sharp, exciting chess produced by both players:

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED
(By Transposition)

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Saigin	Tal	Saigin	Tal
1 P-Q4	N-KB3	16 N-K5	NxN
2 P-QB4	P-B4	17 RxN	P-QN3
3 N-KB3	P-K3	18 N-B3	B-QB4
4 P-KN3	PxP	19 Q-Q2	N-N5
5 NxP	P-Q4	20 KR-K1	P-Q6!
6 B-N2	P-K4	21 R-KB1	Q-Q3!
7 N-B3	P-Q5!	22 Q-B3	P-B3
8 O-O	N-B3	23 QR-Q1	KR-K1
9 P-K3	B-K2	24 R-Q2	B-B4
10 PxP	PxP	25 N-N5	N-K6!
11 QN-Q2	B-K3	26 PxN	BxPch
12 R-K1	O-O	27 K-R1	BxR
13 P-N3	Q-Q2	28 QxB	R-K7
14 B-N2	QR-Q1	29 Q-B3	RxKB!
15 P-QR3	P-QR4	30 Resigns	

If 30 KxB, then 30 . . . P-Q7; 31 R-Q1, B-N5; 32 N-B3, Q-Q6 is decisive.

Tal went on, of course, to phenomenal successes: in 1957 he won his first Soviet championship, and in 1960 the world title.

The great Moscow tournament of 1925 was a comparative failure for world champion José Capablanca—at least he must have regarded it as such. Not only did he finish a lowly third behind two old rivals, Yefim Bogolyubov and Emanuel Lasker, and lose two games to minor Russian masters, Aleksander Ilyin-Genevski and Boris Verlinski, but when he gave an exhibition of simultaneous play in Leningrad shortly after the tournament, he lost a game to a fourteen-year-old boy! True, the game was only one of thirty, and the boy did play very well, but still . . .

The player of the Black pieces on that occasion was Mikhail Moiseyevich Botvinnik, and the game constitutes one of the most spectacular entrances onto the world chess stage, although its first important consequences were still some ten years in the future. Botvinnik has recalled the scene in an interview with Yugoslav journalist Dimitrie Bjelica:

> My mother had bought me a new shirt for the occasion. . . In the hall of the Leningrad Philharmonica it was difficult to find a spare place. However, two acquaintances who were second-category chess-players, very kindly accepted me at the table where the two of them were already sitting. Capablanca did not immediately realize who was playing at my board. When a move was to be made somebody's hand would suddenly move the piece from the side. . . .

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

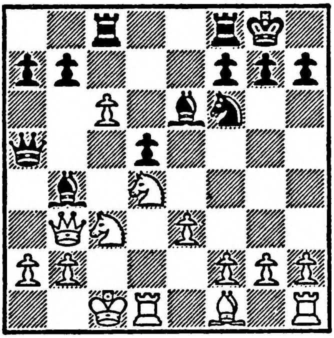
	White	*Black*
	Capablanca	Botvinnik
1	P-Q4	P-Q4
2	P-QB4	P-K3
3	N-QB3	N-KB3
4	B-N5	QN-Q2
5	P-K3	B-N5
6	PxP	PxP
7	Q-N3	P-B4
8	PxP	Q-R4
9	BxN	NxB
10	O-O-O	. . .

A move suitable to a simultaneous exhibition—there was of course no reason for Capablanca to suspect that his unknown opponent could carry out an attack with such unremitting accuracy. In retrospect, the dangers are only too readily apparent; Botvinnik recommends 10 P-QR3, with equality.

10 . . .	O-O
11 N-B3	. . .

After 11 NxP NxN 12 QxN B-K3 White could hardly hope to survive, even against a boy of fourteen.

11 . . .	B-K3
12 N-Q4	QR-B1
13 P-B6	. . .



BOTVINNIK

CAPABLANCA

Capablanca obviously thought that this move, closing the Queen Bishop file, would ensure the safety of his King.

13 . . .	BxN
14 QxB	QxP
15 B-Q3	PxP
16 K-B2	P-B4
17 NxB	. . .

If 17 R-R1, 17 . . . PxN wins.

17 . . .	Q-R5ch
18 P-N3	Q-R7ch
19 Q-N2	QxQch
20 KxQ	PxN

And, with a pawn ahead, Black has a won game.

21 P-B3	R-QB2
22 R-R1	P-B5
23 PxP	PxP
24 B-B2	R-N1ch
25 K-B1	N-Q4
26 R-K1	P-B6
27 R-R3	N-N5
28 R-K2	R-Q1
29 P-K4	R-B3
30 R-K3	R-Q7
31 R/KxP	RxBch
32 RxR	RxRch
Resigns	

Black's technique was impeccable. When he resigned, Capablanca extended his hand and announced to the crowd, "The boy played brilliantly . . . he will go far." Capa may have been slightly off form in his play during his stay in Russia, but as a prophet he was still a world champion.

In 1931 Capablanca was no longer world champion, having lost an arduous match to Alexander Alekhine in Buenos Aires four years previously. He was still about the most popular simultaneous player in the world, however, and when he gave an exhibition on fifty boards in New York in the winter of 1931 the hall was packed with spectators. As each board was to be manned by four players in consultation, Capa faced a horde of adversaries as well, and could hardly have paid much attention to a lad of sixteen among the number of his opponents.

The lad and his teammates soon contrived to lose a pawn, after which three of the collaborators slipped quietly away, expecting, no doubt, that the youngest member of the crew could safely be entrusted with negotiating the articles of surrender. But then a strange thing happened: Capablanca grew careless, and the lad, whose name was Reuben Fine, gradually acquired more and more counterplay. In the end it was Capablanca who had to turn down his King, and yet another career was launched; three years later Fine would be competing in his first international tournament.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

	White Capablanca	*Black* Fine (and others)		*White* Capablanca	*Black* Fine (and others)
1	P-Q4	N-KB3	21	NxR	K-K2
2	P-QB4	P-K3	22	N/1-B3	B-N2
3	N-QB3	P-Q4	23	N-Q4?	K-Q3
4	B-N5	QN-Q2	24	K-B1	K-B4
5	P-K3	B-K2	25	N/4-K2	K-B5
6	N-B3	P-B4	26	K-K1	K-Q6
7	PxQP	BPxP?	27	K-Q1	BxN!
8	QxP	PxP	28	NxB	B-B3
9	B-N5	O-O	29	N-K2	B-R5ch!
10	KBxN	BxB	30	P-N3	B-B3
11	BxN	BxB	31	P-KR4	P-B3
12	QxQP	Q-B1	32	N-B4ch	K-B6
13	N-Q4	R-Q1	33	K-B1	P-KN4!
14	O-O	B-B3	34	PxP	PxP
15	Q-QB5	B-K1	35	N-K6	BxP
16	QxQ	QRxQ	36	NxP	P-KR4!
17	KR-Q1	P-KN3	37	K-Q1	P-R5
18	N/4-K2?	K-B1	38	K-K2	P-R6
19	RxR	RxR	39	P-B3	P-R7
20	R-Q1	RxRch	40	N-K4ch	P-N5

White Capablanca	Black Fine (and others)	White Capablanca	Black Fine (and others)
41 N-B2	P-R8/Q	46 P-R4	P-N3
42 NxQ	BxN	47 K-N3	K-K6
43 K-B2	K-B6	48 P-K5	BxP
44 P-K4	K-Q5	Resigns	
45 P-R3	P-R4		

The international tournament held at Paris in 1924—the seed from which the biennial chess Olympics was later to spring—brought together forty-five players from eighteen countries. The latest of the Olympics, held at Nice, France in the fall of 1974, saw seventy-three countries in competition. At Paris, sixteen of the nations were European (the other two were Argentina and Canada), while at Skopje, six of the world's seven continents were represented (the penguins too were anxious to come, but could not raise the necessary funds in time). Teams from Hong Kong and the Faroe Islands competed on equal terms, if not with equal success, with the big chess powers.

The principal value of the Olympiads, apart from the sporting element, has always been as training tournaments for young players. In each Olympiad, literally hundreds of players whose reputations would never have merited them invitations to an international tournament for individuals come as representatives of their countries and so gain valuable experience of the kind that only an international event can yield. With so many unknown players in the limelight for the first time, each aware that the Olympiad affords him an unrivaled opportunity to capture the attention of the chess world, it is little wonder that some stars have been born there "overnight," in the Broadway sense of that word.

Nowadays, of course, with so much more international activity than at any time in the past, and with the parallel growth of chess publications, it is highly unlikely that any strong player can long remain unknown. In a way, this is a pity, because two of the most exciting episodes in the history of chess have been afforded by young players, previously unknown except in their own small countries, who came to an Olympiad to play at top board for their nations and acquitted themselves so well that they were henceforth established in the ranks of the world's best players.

In 1935 the Estonian team brought with them to the Olympics at Warsaw a tall, skinny teen-ager named Paul Keres. He was in fact champion of Estonia, but Estonia was then, as it is today, well off the main highway of European chess activity. In the town of Parnu, where, in 1917, Keres was born, his only opponent for a long while had been his elder brother. The Keres boys were in love with chess, but couldn't even obtain any chess books, and so compiled a "library" of over 1,000 games by copying them in longhand out of newspaper columns. When he was fourteen years old Paul began to play postal chess, and soon had as many as 150 games going simultaneously. As his chess strength increased, so did his reputation in Estonia.

He himself was well aware, however, of the provincial nature of his fame. Of his debut on the stage of international chess he has written:

> I went with very mixed feelings to my first international tournament, the Warsaw Chess Olympiad. After the Estonian Championship I had taken part in a number of events and attained what seemed like good form; but it must be observed that these events bore a local character and it was also known that at that time Estonian chess life was far from being on an international level. Hence it might perhaps be feared that my first contact with the top class of international masters would result in a veritable catastrophe.

Anyone who entertained such fears (Keres does not say that they were his own) must have been delighted with the outcome: he made the fifth best score on first board, with eleven wins, three losses, and five draws, for 65.8 per cent. As his opposition included world champion Alexander Alekhine and such other luminaries as Reuben Fine, Gideon Stahlberg, Saviely Tartakower and Salo Flohr, his record spoke for itself.

As usual, however, it was not the record that spoke loudest, it was his games. One of them, against the Englishman William Winter, was the sensation of the tournament. It has been reprinted many times; as no account of Keres's play at Warsaw would be complete without it (it is the only game from the tournament he includes in his own collection), we present it again, without notes:

SICILIAN DEFENSE

	White Keres	*Black* Winter		*White* Keres	*Black* Winter
1	P-K4	P-QB4	11	R-N1	PxP
2	N-KB3	N-KB3	12	NxP	B-Q3
3	P-K5	N-Q4	13	NxP	KxN
4	N-B3	P-K3	14	Q-R5ch	P-N3
5	NxN	PxN	15	BxPch	PxB
6	P-Q4	P-Q3	16	QxR	B-KB4
7	B-N5	Q-R4ch	17	KR-K1	B-K5
8	P-B3	BPxP	18	RxB	PxR
9	B-Q3	PxBP	19	Q-B6ch	Resigns
10	O-O	PxNP			

The following game, on the other hand, is practically unknown, although it is an excellent example of Keres's play at this point of his career. Future grandmaster Gideon Stahlberg (1908–1967) was then regarded as the most promising of Sweden's many fine young players.

FRENCH DEFENSE

	White Keres	*Black* Stahlberg
1	P-K4	P-K3
2	P-Q4	P-Q4
3	P-K5	. . .

A line Keres rather liked when he was young because if White wishes he can soon sacrifice one or both of his center pawns in exchange for active play with his minor pieces. The trouble with it is that Black has many opportunities to give back the pawns and simplify the game, and he soon abandoned it in favor of the more solid Tarrasch Variation 3 N-Q2.

. . .	P-QB4
4 N-KB3	. . .

The text move entails the temporary sacrifice of the Queen-Pawn.

. . .	Q-N3
5 B-Q3	PxP
6 O-O	N-Q2
7 QN-Q2	N-K2
8 N-N3	N-QB3
9 R-K1	P-N3

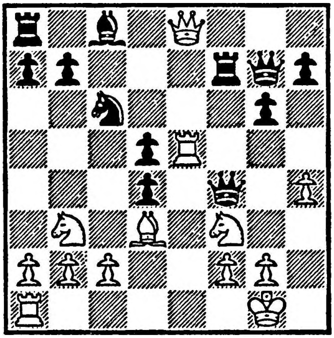
With the idea of bringing an additional piece to bear on White's King-Pawn and of shortening the diagonal of his King-Bishop, but the move weakens the dark squares on the Kingside too much, and Black should have tried 9 . . . N-B4 10 QNxQP NxB 11 QxN B-B4 12 P-B3 B-Q2, with a solid game.

10 B-KB4	B-N2
11 Q-Q2	O-O
12 P-KR4?!	. . .

The obvious way to exploit Black's weakened Kingside, but it should have led to nothing. A more experienced player would probably have tried 12 B-R6, and then if 12 . . . P-B3 (a necessary counterstroke) 13 BxB KxB 14 PxPch NxP 15 Q-N5!, with the better game.

. . .	Q-B2
13 Q-K2	P-B3!?
14 PxP!	QxB

15 QxPch	R-B2
16 PxB	N/2-K4
17 Q-K8ch	KxP
18 RxN	. . .



Both sides must have foreseen this position as early as the twelfth move, but whether either of them had carried his analysis any further is impossible to tell. At any rate Black can now force a draw, thanks in part to White's over-aggressive 12 P-KR4?!.

. . .	B-R6?

After 18 . . . B-N5! 19 QxR NxR 20 NxN QxPch Black draws by perpetual check. The text move loses.

19 QxR	NxR

Or 19 . . . BxP 20 R-B5! PxR 21 N-B5! QxN 22 N-K6ch K-B3 23 R-K1 and wins.

20 Q-K8	N-B3

Or 20 . . . NxNch 21 PxN QxP 22 Q-K5ch and 23 Q-N3.

21 QxRch!	. . .

The simplest.

. . .	KxQ
22 N-N5ch	K-B3
23 NxB	. . .

White now has a huge material advantage and wins by direct attack against the enemy King.

. . .	QxP
24 R-K1	P-KN4
25 N-Q2	Q-R3
26 N-B3	P-N5
27 N/B-N5	Q-R4

The ending after 27 . . . PxN 28 R-K6ch KxN 29 RxQ KxR 30 PxP is hopeless for Black.

28 NxPch	K-N2
29 N-B4	Q-R3
30 N-N5!	Q-Q3
31 N-R5ch	K-B1
32 R-K6	Q-N5
33 B-N6	N-K2
34 R-B6ch	K-N1
35 B-R7ch	Resigns

Between the sixth Olympiad in Warsaw in 1935 and the twelfth in Moscow in 1956 there occurred not only the Second World War and other events of like magnitude, but much chess activity as well, and a gradual change in the climate of international chess. No longer was it possible for a player of Keres's strength to remain for so long in relative obscurity only to come to world attention with one superlative performance. The story of Bent Larsen's feats at the Moscow Olympiad is not, therefore, so dramatic as Keres's at Warsaw—for one thing, Moscow was not Larsen's first Olympiad—but the effect, to call the attention of the entire chess community to a new force to be reckoned with, was the same.

At the Amsterdam Olympiad of 1954 two young Scandinavians, Fredrik Olafsson of Iceland and Bent Larsen of Denmark, both nineteen years old, had made favorable impressions. Olafsson's team had qualified for the A Finals, where he had met such stiff competition on first board that his total (including the preliminaries) of 50 per cent was regarded as highly creditable. Larsen's team had not qualified for the top group, so his 71.1 per cent score was compiled against much weaker opposition, but both young men had played well and it was widely expected that they would be heard from again.

In 1955 Larsen defeated Olafsson 4½–3½ in a match for the so-called Scandinavian championship.

Both came to the 1956 tournament in Moscow with high hopes. Olafsson, particularly, had been playing well; his successes in the two years since Amsterdam included a match win against veteran grandmaster Herman Pilnik of Argentina, and a tie for first place in the 1954 Hastings Christmas tournament with Viktor Korchnoi of the Soviet Union. Despite Larsen's victory in their match, Olafsson's reputation stood much higher. Olafsson played well in Moscow; as his team did not make the A Final this time, his score of 72.2 per cent was compiled against weaker opposition than he had faced at Amsterdam, but he had every reason to be satisfied.

In Moscow it was Denmark's turn among the Scandinavian nations to reach the top group. Larsen's competition at first board included world champion Mikhail Botvinnik, Svetozar Gligorich, Laszlo Szabo and Miguel Najdorf, among others. Therefore his score of 77.8 per cent, highest of all the first-board players, was amazing—good enough to make him a grandmaster at one stroke. "People applauded and I was astonished that it had happened so quickly," Larsen wrote. "This is the only tournament in which I have played better than I expected to do or thought possible beforehand!"

Larsen's best-known win at Moscow was against Yugoslavian grandmaster Svetozar Gligorich. Like Keres's win over Winter, it has been published many times—including in Larsen's own book, where it is admirably annotated—and so we present it here without notes:

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Larsen	Gligorich
1 N-KB3	P-QB4
2 P-K4	P-Q3
3 P-Q4	PxP
4 NxP	N-KB3
5 N-QB3	P-QR3
6 B-K2	P-K4
7 N-N3	B-K2
8 O-O	O-O
9 B-KN5	QN-Q2
10 P-QR4	P-QN3
11 B-QB4	B-N2
12 Q-K2	Q-B2
13 KR-Q1	KR-B1
14 N-Q2	P-R3
15 BxN	NxB
16 B-N3	B-B3
17 N-B4	NxP
18 NxN	P-Q4
19 P-R5	PxN/B
20 QxP	R-B1
21 PxP	QxP
22 N-Q6	B-QN4
23 NxB	PxN
24 Q-Q5	RxR
25 RxR	B-B4
26 R-R8	BxPch
27 K-B1	Q-KB3
28 QxBPch	QxQ
29 BxQch	KxB
30 RxRch	KxR
31 KxB	K-K2
32 K-K3	K-Q3
33 K-K4	P-N5
34 P-B3	P-N6
35 P-B4	P-N3
36 P-N4	P-R4
37 PxP	PxP
38 P-R4	K-B3
39 KxP	K-B4
40 K-B5	K-Q5
41 K-B4	K-B4
42 K-K5	KxP
43 K-K4	K-B4
44 K-Q3	K-Q4
45 K-B3	K-K5
46 KxP	K-B4
47 K-B3	Resigns

Larsen's sternest test, however, came in his encounter with world champion Mikhail Botvinnik. The game they contested shows up well both the strengths and weaknesses of the young grandmaster—the effects of fine play in the opening and early middlegame are negated by a hasty decision at the critical moment. Still, this game, more than any other he played in the long Olympiad, served to indicate that Larsen was now a potent force at the highest levels of international chess.

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Larsen	Botvinnik
1 N-KB3	P-QB4
2 P-K4	. . .

At the time Botvinnik's favorite reply to 1 P-K4 was still the French Defense (1 . . . P-K3)—he became a devotee of the Caro-Kann (1 . . . P-QB3) some time before his 1958 world championship match against his compatriot Vassily Smyslov. He was, in fact, regarded as the world's leading authority on the French, and it was doubtless to avoid a meeting on the champion's home ground that Larsen chose to play 1 N-KB3.

. . .	N-QB3
3 P-Q4	PxP
4 NxP	N-B3
5 N-QB3	P-Q3
6 B-KN5	. . .

This move, with the idea of 7 Q-Q2 followed by placing a rook on the Queen-file to exert pressure on Black's Queen-Pawn, is a contribution of the Russian Veslovod Rauzer (1908–1941). It has given Botvinnik plenty of trouble throughout his long career—more so, perhaps, than any other variation.

. . .	P-K3
7 Q-Q2	P-KR3

In his 1957 match against Smyslov Botvinnik played 7 . . . P-QR3 several times, with the continuation 8 0-0-0 P-R3 9 B-K3 N-KN5 10 NxN PxN 11 B-B5!, after which White stood better. The most popular line has always been 7 . . . B-K2 8 0-0-0 0-0, with a difficult struggle ahead.

8 BxN . . .

And not 8 B-R4? because of 8 . . . NxP!.

. . . PxB

If 8 . . . QxB?, 9 N/4-N5 wins the Queen-Pawn.

9 R-Q1 . . .

This is safer than 9 0-0-0, in that it affords Black fewer opportunities for counterplay, but is also less likely to lead to a significant advantage.

. . . P-QR3
10 B-K2 P-KR4

It was absolutely necessary to prevent 11 B-R5.

11 O-O B-Q2
12 K-R1 Q-N3
13 N-N3 B-K2
14 P-B4 P-R5?

Black should either castle or play 14 . . . Q-R2 to anticipate White's next move. With the text Black merely weakens his position farther.

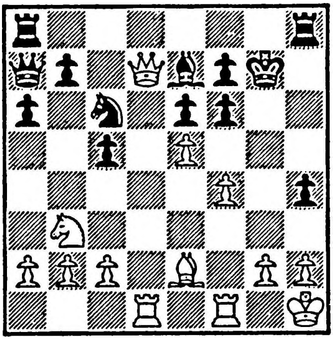
15 N-R4! Q-R2

After 15 . . . Q-B2 White plays 16 Q-K3! (16 . . . N-N5 17 N-N6 R-Q1 18 P-B3). Now, however, Black's King should have come under heavy fire.

16 N/4-B5! PxN

Or 16 . . . B-B1 17 N-Q3! and, in his undeveloped state, Black can hardly counter White's threats to advance in the center by P-K5 or P-B4-5.

17 QxBch	K-B1
18 P-K5	K-N2



19 N-R5?	. . .

Instead, 19 PxPch! BxP 20 Q-Q2, followed by P-B5, would have led to a strong, probably decisive, attack. In choosing the text, Larsen doubtless thought he was proceeding in an equally advantageous and safer way, but he must have overlooked Botvinnik's clever 21st move.

. . .	KR-Q1
20 NxN	RxQ
21 NxQ	R-B2!

After 21 . . . RxR 22 RxR RxN 23 R-Q7 White's bind is probably sufficient to win, despite the Bishops of opposite color. But fortunately for Black there is no need to surrender control of his second rank.

22 P-KN3	. . .

The weakness of Black's pawns after 22 N-B6 PxN cannot be exploited. Now the Bishops of opposite color lead to a safe draw.

. . .	RxN
23 PxP	P-B4

24	R-N1ch	K-R2
25	P-R4	R-R1
26	P-QR5	R-Q1
27	RxR	BxR
28	R-Q1	BxP
29	R-Q6	B-K2
30	R-N6	B-Q1
31	B-B3	R-K2
32	RxNP	RxR
33	BxR	BxP
34	P-B3	P-B3
35	B-B8	PxP
36	PxP	B-B2
37	BxKP	BxP
38	BxPch	K-N2
39	K-N2	B-B5
	DRAW	

II

The Opening

The game of chess, as every beginner soon discovers, is divided into three parts, the opening, the middle game, and the ending. It is not necessary, or even possible, to define these terms precisely—to know, during the course of a game, that the opening phase has ended and the middle game has begun is of no practical use whatever. The way in which a writer on chess defines a term such as "opening" often reveals more about his own attitudes, and those of his time, than they do about the thing itself. To prove this point we quote two different definitions, written about fifty years apart. The first is from Edward Lasker's book *Chess Strategy* (published originally in German in 1911):

> Strictly speaking, the opening comprises only such moves as are *necessary* for the development of the pieces, and any move which a player—without being compelled—makes with a piece that is already developed, ought to be regarded as a Middle Game.

The second is that of Russian grandmaster Alexi Suetin in his book *Modern Chess Opening Theory* (published originally in Russian in 1958):

Today the *opening* has long ceased to be regarded simply as that stage of the game when the players mobilize their forces. The "opening" is now the name given to the sum total of our knowledge of various methods of treating the original position, which in the vast majority of variations extend into complicated middle game positions, and sometimes even as far as the endgame.

That these definitions contradict one another so strikingly is due in part to a confusion of terms: the word "opening" is used to refer both to the initial stage of a game—where it is opposed to the terms "middle game" and "ending"—and to each of the various schemes of piece development that have been codified over the years, as when we speak of the Ruy Lopez *opening*. Nevertheless, there is a real difference in outlook revealed in the definitions offered by Lasker and Suetin, and to understand it fully it is helpful to review the way in which opening play has been regarded throughout the history of chess.

The systematic study of the opening moves in chess is not new—H. J. R. Murray in his definitive *History of Chess* reprints analyses from Arabic manuscripts of the eleventh century in which several opening patterns are subjected to elaborate scrutiny. From Europe there are several extant manuscripts—the Göttingen Manuscript of about 1475 is the most famous example—in which tables of opening play are set forth. These are probably the work of professional players who wanted to present wealthy patrons with examples of their art, or even the efforts of those professionals to set down what were regarded at the time as the mysteries of a craft akin to wool dyeing or stonemasonry. How closely these manuscripts reflect the realities of actual play is difficult to determine; they cite not real games but analyses which often seem directed either to make the play more colorful or to set off one side or the other in a favorable light.

Until the latter part of the fifteenth century, when the rules of chess underwent a radical change that speeded up the pace of play considerably, the opening stage of the game was mostly a matter of long-winded maneuvering behind the lines.

When the powers of the various pieces were drastically increased, however, it became important for the first time to play the opening accurately—imprecise play could now meet with immediate and drastic punishment.

The greater attacking possibilities offered by the new rules (especially the vastly increased powers of the Queen) held the fascinated attention of the best chessplayers for several centuries. With the noteworthy exception of the Frenchman Philidor (1726–95), who concerned himself with more general investigations into the nature of the game, and whose name is today widely associated with the principles of pawn play, all the best chess minds of Europe for several hundred years were intent on more and more elaborate Kingside attacks. As skill in defense lagged far behind, their efforts usually met with success, and success naturally encouraged further efforts in the same direction. Opening analysis was for the most part confined to study of those lines that led to direct attack against the enemy King, and that yielded some of their secrets, at least, to precise calculation—the King's Gambit, for example, probably received more extensive study up until the middle of the nineteenth century than all other openings put together.

To give an idea of how opening study was carried on in the earlier nineteenth century it is only necessary to tell the story of Captain Evans and his gambit. Some time in the year 1834 Alexander McDonnell, the strongest British player of the day, was sitting quietly in the quarters of the London chess club of which he was the professional (much like the golf pro at a modern country club), when in walked a young captain of the merchant marine, William Davies Evans. Evans was later to achieve fame as a nautical innovator: he is the inventor of a system of ships' signal lights still in use. He approached McDonnell with appropriate diffidence, asked if he might be permitted to show him a new gambit he had discovered, and proceeded to unfold the opening moves 1 P-K4 P-K4 2 N-KB3 N-QB3 3 B-B4 B-B4 4 P-QN4!? which was to become one of the most popular opening lines of the nineteenth century. The time when a casual discovery by an amateur could influence the thinking of the entire chess world was not to last very much longer, however.

One of the great changes in the best players' approach to the problems of the opening came with the beginnings of organized tournament play, starting with the London tournament of 1851. When the patronage of the wealthy was still an important part of the professional player's livelihood, it was necessary for him to impress potential benefactors with the brilliance of his play, and in those times brilliance was understood as the ability to carry off flashy attacks against the enemy King, usually with much sacrifice of material along the way. As most games were played for relatively small stakes, and as all sacrifices were usually accepted without question and defensive techniques usually incompetent, pawns and pieces continued to be surrendered with reckless abandon. With the beginnings of tournament play, on the other hand, where the outcome of each game served in part to determine the allotment both of fame and of substantial sums of prize money, it behooved the players to be far more cautious with their material (although the wry saying "Always sacrifice your opponent's pieces" did not come into vogue until much later).

The names of several great nineteenth-century players—the American Paul Morphy, whose ideas about piece development revolutionized opening play after his spectacular successes during his European tour of 1858, the first official world champion Wilhelm Steinitz, who in the later part of his career concentrated mostly on defensive play, the innovative Russian Mikhail Tchigorin, and others—would occupy prominent places in any full-scale history of chess opening theory. For our purposes, however, it is more important to note that, for the most part, the top-ranking tournament and match players paid little attention to the theoretical substructure of the openings. Some may have indulged in analysis from time to time, as a hobby or in connection with some specific task, but were largely content to leave the systematic study of the openings to a few isolated enthusiasts, most of whom were players of far lesser rank. The first important compendium of the openings was the work of a group of Berlin amateurs, the most famous of whom, Paul Rudolf von Bilguier, gave his name to the *Handbuch* they produced. Others who compiled similar works up until well into the twentieth century, such as the Swede Ludvig Collijn and the Englishmen Richard Clewin Griffith and J. H. White (editors of the first edition of *Modern Chess Openings*), usually labored for sheer love of the game, and were not professional players.

As most of the opening analyses published during this time were the work of amateurs, the stronger players were usually contemptuous of them. For the most part they worked out their opening schemes over the board in tournaments, looking to general principles to guide them through any complexities that might arise. For new ideas they would scour the games of their fellow players, and if someone saw something in the opening play of one of his colleagues that he liked, he would copy it, perhaps adding some minor improvement of his own devising. The casual attitudes of world champions Emanuel Lasker (titleholder from 1894 to 1921) and José Capablanca (1921–27) helped to encourage similar lack of interest among lesser players.

There were some few exceptions, however, and two of them, Akiba Rubinstein and Alexander Alekhine, must be ranked among the most creative opening analysts of all time. When Alekhine, whose tireless investigations became a byword for thoroughness, and who scrutinized every chess game he could lay his hands on in quest of improvements in opening play, became world champion in 1927, there was some growth of interest in the openings, but not as much as might have been expected, at least not among players in America and Western Europe.

In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, where chess received official encouragement and well-organized efforts were made to promote the game, intensive opening preparation was a part of the program almost from the outset. Technical journals were published of a kind unknown in the West, that enabled the better players to keep up with the latest developments in opening theory and practice. The first fruits of this program were the successes in international competition of

Mikhail Botvinnik, who was noted for his methodical preparation in all phases of the game, but especially the opening.

The distance between the opening knowledge of the best Soviet players and their counterparts in the Western countries did not become apparent, however, until after the Second World War. The first international chess event held after the conclusion of hostilities, a ten-board match by radio between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., saw an American team that contained most of the players who had brought home four victories in world team competition in the 1930's crushed by their little-known Soviet rivals by the score of 15½–4½. Many of the American losses can be attributed directly to better opening play on the part of the Russians; two in particular may be cited. The first is Mikhail Botvinnik's crushing victory over American champion Arnold Denker in a very complicated opening variation that Botvinnik had made his own:

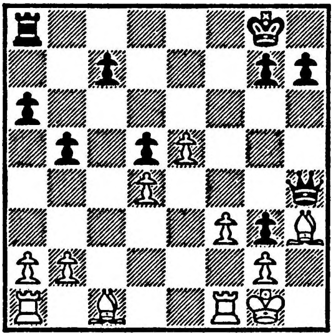
SLAV DEFENSE

White Denker	*Black* Botvinnik	*White* Denker	*Black* Botvinnik
1 P-Q4	P-Q4	14 P-QR4	P-N5
2 P-QB4	P-K3	15 N-K4	P-B4
3 N-QB3	P-QB3	16 Q-N1	Q-B2
4 N-B3	N-B3	17 N-N3	PxP
5 B-N5	PxP	18 BxP	Q-B3
6 P-K4	P-N4	19 P-B3	P-Q6
7 P-K5	P-KR3	20 Q-B1	B-B4ch
8 B-R4	P-N4	21 K-R1	Q-Q3
9 NxKNP	PxN	22 Q-B4	RxPch
10 BxNP	QN-Q2	23 KxR	R-R1ch
11 PxN	B-QN2	24 Q-R4	RxQch
12 B-K2	Q-N3	25 BxR	Q-B5
13 O-O	O-O-O	Resigns	

The second is Vassily Smyslov's win over Samuel Reshevsky, in an opening variation extensively analyzed in the Soviet Union. When the position shown in the diagram was reached, Reshevsky had consumed an hour and a half on his clock; when the American team wired for the amount of time Smyslov had used, they were dismayed at the answer: one minute!—for him, it was all book. (Since this game was played, solid improvements have been discovered for Black.)

RUY LOPEZ

White Smyslov	*Black* Reshevsky	*White* Smyslov	*Black* Reshevsky
1 P-K4	**P-K4**	**12 N-N3**	**B-N3**
2 N-KB3	**N-QB3**	**13 KN-Q4**	**NxN**
3 B-N5	**P-QR3**	**14 NxN**	**BxN**
4 B-R4	**N-B3**	**15 PxB**	**P-B5**
5 O-O	**NxP**	**16 P-B3**	**N-N6?!**
6 P-Q4	**P-QN4**	**17 PxN**	**PxP**
7 B-N3	**P-Q4**	**18 Q-Q3**	**B-B4**
8 PxP	**B-K3**	**19 QxB**	**RxQ**
9 P-B3	**B-QB4**	**20 BxR**	**Q-R5**
10 QN-Q2	**O-O**	**21 B-R3**	**. . .**
11 B-B2	**P-B4**		



White	*Black*
Smyslov	Reshevsky
21 . . .	QxPch
22 K-R1	QxKP
23 B-Q2	QxP
24 B-B4	P-B4
25 B-K6ch	K-R1
26 BxQP	R-Q1
27 QR-Q1	P-B5
28 BxNP	P-B6
29 B-K5	P-N5
30 B-QN3	R-Q7
31 P-B4	P-KR4
32 R-QN1	R-KB7
33 KR-K1	Q-Q7
34 QR-Q1	Q-N7
35 R-Q8ch	K-R2
36 B-N8ch	K-N3
37 R-Q6ch	K-B4
38 B-K6ch	K-N3
39 B-Q5ch	K-R2
40 B-K4ch	K-N1
41 B-N6	Resigns

Smyslov, in fact, relied on prepared analysis for several moves beyond the position in the diagram, and had achieved a winning position sometime before he ever needed to find a move over the board. The opening in this game, although hardly typical (it is known as the "long" variation precisely because it has been analyzed further than most others), points up a trend, and verifies Suetin's assertion that opening analysis can "extend into complicated middle-game positions, and sometimes even as far as the endgame."

There is a story told of Soviet grandmaster Ratmir Kholmov that may serve to emphasize the point. Kholmov was playing in the semifinals of one of the annual Soviet championships, against a first-category player. The game quickly became very complicated and Kholmov, who was struggling hard to find the best move at every turn, was disconcerted to see how easily his opponent was finding his replies. The game ended in a draw and Kholmov, who had used nearly all his time, asked the first-category player, who had used barely half an hour, why he had played so quickly. "But, Tovarish Kholmov," his astonished opponent replied, "you've played this game before." It was true; the first-category player had found it during the course of his preparations, and, content to draw with a grandmaster, had simply followed it from beginning to end.

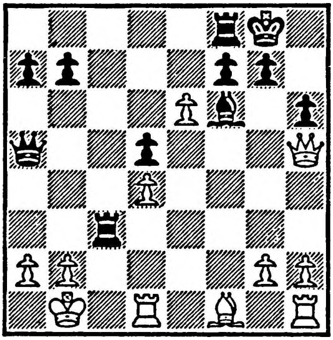
For roughly twenty years after the decisive radio match the Soviets maintained a solid lead in the field of opening play, so much so that the term "Russian analysis" came to mean any prepared opening variation, whether it owed anything to Soviet labors or not. It wasn't until the rise to prominence of present world champion Bobby Fischer that the Western world could show an analyst on a par with the best of the Russians. From the first, Fischer devoured all the chess books and periodicals (especially Russian ones) that he could lay his hands on. His attention to opening analysis was fanatical, in the way that Alekhine's had been, and, what was almost as important, he infected other players with the same enthusiasm. Intensive preparation in the openings became a part of every strong player's routine, and the depth of opening knowledge has increased enormously even among the weaker players, especially since Fischer's victory over Spassky in 1972. Recent years have witnessed a proliferation of technical books and journals devoted largely to the openings, and no serious player can hope to do well who does not keep up with them. In the pages that follow, we hope to convey some notion of the ways in which the top players struggle for the slightest advantage in opening knowledge over their prospective opponents, and of how such slight advantages can often be sufficient for victory.

To burn midnight oil in the study of the chess openings is much more hard work than high adventure, but the occupation does have its romantic side. Two stories have entered into chess folklore about men who found new moves in familiar positions and concealed their discoveries for years until fate granted the perfect opportunity in which to spring them.

The American Harry Nelson Pillsbury lost the following game to the then world champion Emanuel Lasker in the St. Petersburg grandmasters' tournament of 1895–96:

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

White Pillsbury	*Black* Lasker	*White* Pillsbury	*Black* Lasker
1 P-Q4	P-Q4	10 K-N1	P-KR3
2 P-QB4	P-K3	11 PxP	PxP
3 N-QB3	N-KB3	12 N-Q4	O-O
4 N-B3	P-B4	13 BxN	BxB
5 B-N5	BPxP	14 Q-R5	NxN
6 QxP	N-B3	15 PxN	B-K3
7 Q-R4	B-K2	16 P-B4	QR-B1
8 O-O-O	Q-R4	17 P-B5	RxN
9 P-K3	B-Q2	18 PxB	. . .



18 . . .	R-QR6	24 KR-Q1	R-B6
19 PxPch	RxP	25 Q-B5	Q-B5
20 PxR	Q-N3ch	26 K-N2	RxP
21 B-N5	QxBch	27 Q-K6ch	K-R2
22 K-R1	R-B2	28 KxR	Q-B6ch
23 R-Q2	R-B5	Resigns	

In the final position Black mates in four by 29 K-R4, P-N4ch; 30 KxP, Q-B5ch; 31 K-R5, B-Q1ch; 32 Q-N6, PxQ mate. Lasker later called this the best game of his life.

When Pillsbury returned to New York, he told a young admirer, William Ewart Napier, of an idea that had occurred to him just after he had played his seventh move—the weak 7 Q-R4?:

> Nimbly, his little ivory chessmen were set up at the sixth move, and he played 7 BxN—all with a characteristic look which plainly meant "With that blow, the next time, if any, I'll hit him where I missed him before."

Napier, in his book *Amenities and Backgrounds of Chess-Play,* goes on to recount how Pillsbury and he continued play from that position frequently over the next eight years: "It became a bore: the life of a canal horse." The variation was a popular one in those days, and Pillsbury could have played his new move on a number of occasions, had he not been determined to save it for use against Lasker. He met Lasker over the board several times during that period, but the critical position somehow never arose.

Finally, in Pillsbury's last tournament, in Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, 1904, the big day arrived. Napier, who was also playing in the tournament, tells what happened:

> At Cambridge Springs, I got up from my table to stretch, and met Pillsbury. Of course, I knew he was playing Dr. Lasker. I knew also in what wretched health my hero was, a wreck with not long to live, and past playing chess, except as his practised hand might play it, robot fashion.
>
> Said Pillsbury, "He's gone into the Petersburg thing!" "And what did he play?" said I. Then, with a grin that was in itself no mean work of art, he said, "Take a look! It is, I guess, the only damn scheme you never tried!!"

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

White Pillsbury	*Black* Lasker
1 P-Q4	P-Q4
2 P-QB4	P-K3
3 N-QB3	N-KB3
4 N-B3	P-B4
5 B-N5	. . .

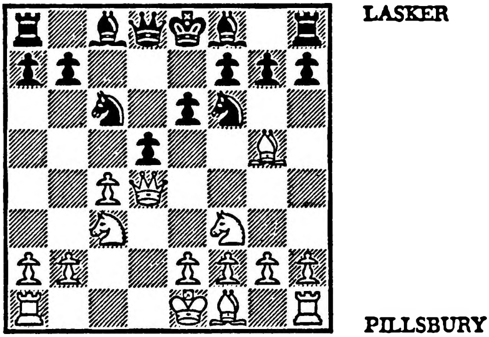
Nowadays, 5 BPxP is almost always played here.

5 . . .	BPxP
6 QxP	

After 6 KNxP, P-K4; 7 N-B3, P-Q5; 8 N-Q5, B-K2!; 9 BxN, BxB; 10 P-K4, PxP e.p.!; 11 NxP, QxQch; 12 RxQ, P-K5! etc., Black has a good game.

6 . . .	N-B3

Here 6 . . . B-K2 is also good.



7 BxN	PxB
8 Q-R4	PxP
9 R-Q1	B-Q2
10 P-K3	N-K4?

Black should now continue his development with 10 . . . B-K2 or 10 . . . P-B4; 11 QxBP, B-N2. The text move constitutes a fatal waste of time.

11 NxN	PxN
12 QxBP	Q-N3
13 B-K2	QxP
14 O-O	R-B1

15 Q-Q3	R-B2
16 N-K4	B-K2
17 N-Q6ch	K-B1
18 N-B4	Q-N5
19 P-B4!	PxP
20 Q-Q4	P-B3
21 QxP/4	Q-B4
22 N-K5!	B-K1
23 N-N4	P-B4
24 Q-R6ch	K-B2
25 B-B4!	R-B3
26 RxPch	QxR
27 R-B1	QxRch
28 KxQ	B-Q2
29 Q-R5ch	K-N1
30 N-K5	Resigns

Pillsbury's illness was, as Napier had surmised, fatal; he died about two years later. Nevertheless, his story is, in a way, the happier of the two; he did score a point for his troubles. For fellow American Frank Marshall the rewards were purely esthetic: his innovation in the Ruy Lopez, which he first played against José Capablanca in the opening round of a tournament in New York in 1918, is still after more than fifty years a subject for analytical debate, eloquent testimony to the depth of the original conception. Marshall is said to have discovered his new move about ten years previously, and to have thought so highly of it that he kept it to himself until he could play it against an adversary of sufficient importance. Capablanca proved himself fully worthy of the grand occasion: he rebuffed Marshall's analysis ad lib and won the game.

RUY LOPEZ

White	*Black*
Capablanca	Marshall
1 P-K4	P-K4
2 N-KB3	N-QB3
3 B-N5	. . .

This is the characteristic move of the Ruy Lopez opening, named after the Spanish priest who was reputedly the strongest player of the sixteenth century. It is sometimes jokingly called "the Spanish torture" because of the lasting pressure to which Black is subjected in most lines. Gambit variations by which the defender might loosen White's grip have engaged the attention of both practical players and theoreticians ever since Lopez first published his analysis back in 1561,[*] and of them Marshall's gambit must certainly be rated one of the most fruitful.

3 . . .	**P-QR3**
4 B-R4	**N-B3**
5 O-O	**B-K2**
6 R-K1	**P-QN4**
7 B-N3	**O-O**
8 P-B3	**. . .**

When Marshall elected to defend a Ruy Lopez instead of playing his habitual Petroff, Capablanca must have suspected that something unusual was afoot. This move, instead of the then almost inevitable 7 . . . P-Q3, would have confirmed his suspicions, and he must have wondered whether to avert the impending violence by, say, 8 P-QR4, was not his wisest course. At that time, however, Capablanca was at the height of his powers, and his self-confidence was unbounded. He no doubt thought he could outplay Marshall in the tactical melée to follow, and the event proved him right.

8 . . .	**P-Q4!?**
9 PxP	**NxP**
10 NxP	**NxN**
11 RxN	**N-B3**

---

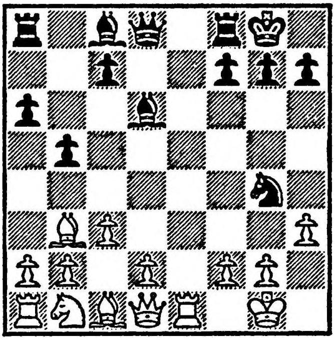
[*] Or even earlier. The opening is mentioned in the Göttingen Manuscript, which dates from the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

This was Marshall's original idea. Later he advocated what has come to be the modern move, 11 . . . P-QB3, as offering more lasting prospects of attack.

12 R-K1 . . .

To avert the threat of 12 . . . B-Q3 and 13 . . . N-N5. It was later decided that 12 P-Q4, and if 12 . . . B-Q3, then 13 R-K2, is the most precise way to meet Black's assault.

12 . . . B-Q3
13 P-KR3 N-N5


MARSHALL

CAPABLANCA

14 Q-B3! . . .

And not 14 PxN?, Q-R5; 15 P-N3, KBxP; 16 PxB, QxPch; 17 K-B1, BxP, and Black wins.

14 . . . Q-R5
15 P-Q4 . . .

Obviously not 15 QxR?? because of 15 . . . QxPch, with mate to follow.

15 . . . NxP

The sharpest continuation of the attack; if now 16 QxN then 16 . . . B-R7ch; 17 K-B1, B-N6; 18 Q-K2 BxP!; 19 PxB, QR-K1; 20 B-K3, BxR; 21 QxB, QxPch; 22 K-B2, Q-R5ch; 23 K-B1, QxQch; 24 KxQ, RxBch, with a winning game for Black.

16 R-K2	B-N5

Another ingenious Marshall shot; if now 17 QxN, then 17 . . . B-N6 18 Q-B1 BxR 19 QxB QR-B1 wins outright.

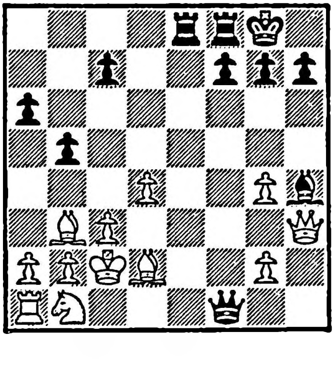
17 PxB	B-R7ch
18 K-B1	B-N6

On 18 . . . N-R8 White has 19 B-K3 N-N6ch 19 K-K1 NxRch 21 KxN QR-K1 22 N-Q2 Q-K2 23 R-R1, with a winning game.

19 RxN	Q-R8ch
20 K-K2	BxR

Or 20 . . . QxB 21 QxB QxPch 22 K-Q3! QxR 23 K-B2 P-N5 24 P-N5 PxP 25 QxP/3, and again White should win.

21 B-Q2	B-R5
22 Q-R3!	QR-K1ch
23 K-Q3	Q-B8ch
24 K-B2	. . .



The attack is now broken, and Capablanca proceeds to make use of his material advantage in the most efficient way.

24 . . .	B-B7
25 Q-B3	Q-N8
26 B-Q5	P-B4
27 PxP	BxP
28 P-N4	B-Q3
29 P-R4	P-QR4
30 RPxP	PxP
31 R-R6	PxP
32 NxP	B-N5
33 P-N6	BxN
34 BxB	P-R3
35 P-N7	R-K6
36 BxPch	Resigns

It's mate in six.

Both of these stories, as we said earlier, are cherished pieces of chess folklore (which by no means implies that they are not true). However, the time when a man might clutch his precious brainchild to his bosom for long years to send it forth at the appropriate moment are long gone. These days, he could hardly hope to conceal an improvement in a well-known line for ten weeks, let alone ten years; so many more games are played nowadays, and the openings subjected to such thorough scrutiny, that the new idea would doubtless be discovered independently before very long, and the original finder would lose the benefits of his labor. In the hectic world of contemporary chess, the interval between the time a new move is discovered and the time it is first tried in an important tournament game is more likely to be a few weeks, or even a few days.

To illustrate this point, we have selected some examples from the praxis of the Yugoslav grandmaster Svetozar Gligorich. Gligorich is not only one of the best players around today, but one of the most painstaking students of the opening: he keeps an elaborate card index of all the latest developments, and in addition devotes long hours every day to the quest for subtle improvements in the most popular variations. Gligorich is also one of the most active players on the European circuit, and so has ample opportunity to put his discoveries to practical use.

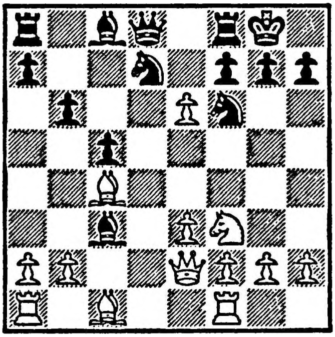
The "new moves" (they are old moves by this time) that Gligorich introduces in the games below are by no means among the most important innovations of recent years—they are not even among the most important introduced by Gligorich himself. They are, rather, typical innovations—indicative of the kind of detail to which a practicing grandmaster must attend if he hopes to retain his place at the top of the tournament chess business. What is important to perceive in the process is the spirit of give and take: one player introduces a new move, and wins a game, or even draws one with Black—in tournament play an easy draw with the Black pieces can also be counted a success. Then someone else finds a way to strengthen the other side, plays his new move, and scores his success. Then either the first player, or the second, or even some third party, turns up yet another little improvement—and so on, and on. The goal is entirely pragmatic: to win (or draw) the next game.

The starting point of this chain is often difficult to find, and the end even more so, for who can say when yet another new move may be found in even the most thoroughly analyzed of lines? We begin, then, somewhat arbitrarily, with the game Gligorich-Parma, from the Yugoslav championship of 1965:

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Gligorich	Parma	Gligorich	Parma
1 P-Q4	N-KB3	7 O-O	QPxP
2 P-QB4	P-K3	8 BxP	QN-Q2
3 N-QB3	B-N5	9 Q-K2	P-QN3
4 P-K3	P-B4	10 P-Q5	BxN
5 B-Q3	O-O	11 PxP	B-R4!
6 N-B3	P-Q4		

PARMA



GLIGORICH

We have entered the drama *in medias res.* A few months previously, in an international tournament at Zagreb (also in Yugoslavia), Parma had played 11 . . . N-K4 in this position against Gligorich, and had drawn rather easily. In the meantime, however, a tournament had been played at Natanya, Israel, and a game contested between the Israeli Yuri Kraidman and the Yugoslav Aleksander Matanovich had gone 11 . . . N-K4; 12 PxPch, K-R1; 13 PxB, B-N5; 14 P-K4, N-R4; 15 B-Q5, Q-B3. Here Gligorich had played 16 Q-K3 against Parma, but Kraidman, "thinking he had fallen into a trap, out of desperation, tried 16 B-N5! . . . That move loses a piece; but after 16 . . . QxB; 17 NxQ, BxQ; 18 P-KB4! it was Black who had to save the game, though a rook up! Matanovich managed to salvage a draw after 18 . . . N-N3! and a long defense. But no one has cared to repeat that performance with Black since." (Gligorich in *Selected Chess Masterpieces,* New York, 1970).

12 PxN	QxP
13 P-K4	B-N2
14 P-K5	KR-K1
15 N-N5	B-Q4!
16 P-B4	P-KR3
17 N-B3	BxB
18 QxB	Q-Q4
19 Q-B2	Draw

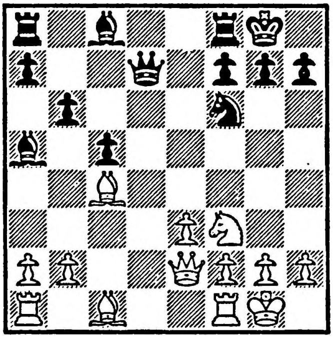
Score one (or, at any rate, ½) for Parma.

A few rounds later Gligorich had White against Matanovich. Matanovich and Parma are very good friends; they analyze a good deal together and were in fact sharing a hotel room during this tournament. Gligorich had every reason to expect that Matanovich would try to duplicate his friend's success in their favorite variation, and had prepared accordingly:

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Gligorich	Matanovich

(First twelve moves as in Gligorich-Parma, above)



13 R-Q1!	. . .

"The key move!" writes Gligorich. "White takes the central squares on the Queen file under control with a gain of tempo."

13 . .	**Q-N5**
14 P-KR3	**Q-R4**
15 P-K4	**B-N2**
16 P-K5	**BxN**
17 PxB	**QR-K1**

18 B-B4	QxRP
19 B-R2	. . .

"White disregards his Pawn minus as he has complete control of the center and also possesses the mighty Two Bishops, though one must add especially the white-bound Bishop." (Gligorich)

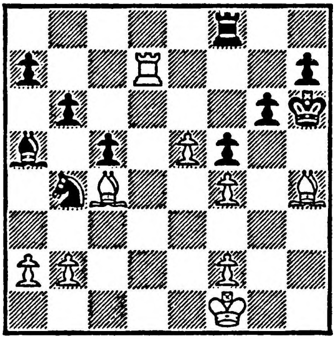
19 . . .	K-R1
20 Q-B1	QxQch
21 KxQ	. . .

White has a winning ending despite his pawn minus because of his two Bishops and control of the open lines. His potentially passed King pawn is very dangerous—Black cannot now play 21 . . . N-R4, for instance, because the knight must keep his K2 square under constant observation.

21 . . .	N-N1
22 R-Q7	P-B4
23 P-B4	N-K2
24 R/1-Q1	N-B3
25 R/1-Q6	R-K2
26 B-Q5	RxR
27 RxR	N-N5
28 B-B7	P-N3
29 B-KN3	. . .

And not 29 P-K6?, K-N2; 30 P-K7, KxB; etc., with counterplay for Black.

29 . . .	K-N2
30 B-B4ch	K-R3
31 B-R4	. . .



With the unanswerable threat of 32 B-N5ch, K-R4; 33 B-K2 mate, Black resigns.

The two games that follow are perhaps even more characteristic, because they were played against the same opponent, the first of them in a semifinal round of the 1971 European team championship, the second in the annual Yugoslavia-Hungary match, played about a week later. Hungarian Lajos Portisch is one of the hardest workers among the grandmasters: he is reported to spend about eight hours a day, seven days a week, on his chess studies. That he thought he could get by twice with the same variation against an adversary of Gligorich's shrewdness must be regarded as a lapse of judgment.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT

	White	*Black*
	Gligorich	Portisch
1	P-Q4	P-Q4
2	P-QB4	PxP
3	N-KB3	N-KB3
4	P-K3	P-K3
5	BxP	P-B4
6	O-O	P-QR3

7 P-QR4	N-B3
8 Q-K2	PxP
9 R-Q1	B-K2
10 PxP	O-O
11 N-B3	N-Q4
12 B-Q3	QN-N5
13 B-N1	P-QN3!

An innovation by Portisch, and an apparent improvement on the old plan of 13 . . . B-Q2 and 14 . . . B-B3. Gligorich fails to find the best reply—this time.

14 N-K5?	B-N2
15 R-R3	R-B1
16 P-R5	. . .

This is ineffectual now, but after 16 NxN, QxN; 17 R-KN3, P-B4! White is stymied on the Kingside.

16 . . .	P-QN4
17 N-K4	P-B4
18 N-B5	BxN
19 PxB	RxP
20 R-KN3	R-QB2

White has some compensation for his material deficit in his pair of Bishops and the backwardness of Black's King pawn. However, he could hardly have been satisfied with the course of the game thus far.

21 B-N5	Q-B1?

An error; after 21 . . . Q-K1! (preventing 22 Q-R5), White has nothing on the Kingside.

22 Q-R5	Q-K1
23 Q-R4	N-QB3
24 N-B3	N-N1
25 R-R3	N-KB3

Not 26 . . . P-R3?; 27 BxRP, PxB; 28 QxP, R-N2; 29 N-K5, and White wins.

26 BxN	PxB
27 R-N3ch	K-R1
28 R-K1	BxN
29 PxB!	Q-B1
30 Q-R6	. . .

Threatening 31 RxP!

30 . . .	R/1-B2
31 B-R2	QR-K2
32 Q-K3	Q-B2
33 BxP	R-N2
34 Q-Q4?	. . .

Better was 34 R-QB1.

34 . . .	N-Q2
35 K-N2	P-B5
36 RxR	KxR
37 R-K4??	N-B4
38 RxP	RxB
39 R-N4ch	K-R1
Resigns	

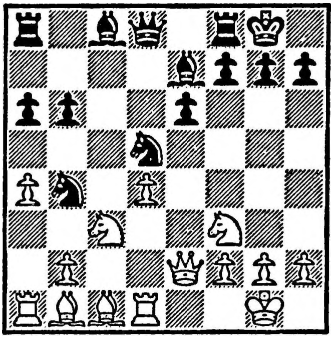
Gligorich's collapse in time pressure may well be attributable to his struggles in the opening.

One week later, however . . .

QUEEN'S GAMBIT

White	*Black*
Gligorich	**Portisch**

(First thirteen moves as in the game above)



14 P-R5!	. . .

Gligorich had discovered in the interval that this move, which threatens 15 N-QR4, is the correct response to Portisch's innovation. Now it is the Hungarian grandmaster's turn to be under pressure.

14 . . .	**B-Q2**
15 N-K5	**PxP**
16 R-R3!	. . .

With the threat of 17 NxN and 18 BxPch!

16 . . .	**P-B4**
17 NxN	**NxN**
18 NxB	**QxN**
19 RxP	. . .

Now Black's isolated Queen-Rook-pawn is a serious weakness.

19 . . .	N-B2
20 B-R2	B-Q3
21 B-QB4	K-R1
22 Q-B3	. . .

Not 22 BxRP? BxPch! 23 KxB Q-Q3ch.

22 . . .	B-N5
23 R-R1	P-QR4
24 B-B4	N-Q4
25 B-K5	KR-B1
26 Q-K2	Q-N2
27 P-R3	R-B3
28 QR-B1	QR-QB1
29 BxN	PxB
30 RxR	QxR
31 R-Q3	Q-Q2

If 31 . . . Q-B7?, 32 BxPch! wins.

32 R-KN3	B-B1
33 P-N3	R-R1
34 Q-B2	R-B1
35 Q-Q2	R-R1
36 Q-N5	K-N1
37 R-KB3	P-N3
38 R-B3	Q-Q1
39 Q-B1	B-Q3
40 Q-B4	BxB
41 QxB	R-R2
42 R-B5!	R-K2

If 42 . . . R-Q2?; 43 R-N5, K-B2; 44 R-N8, Q-K2; 45 Q-R8, and White wins.

43 RxQP	Q-B2
44 QxQ	RxQ
45 RxRP	R-QN2

46	R-R3	R-N5
47	P-Q5	K-N2
48	K-B1	K-B3
49	K-K2	K-K4
50	K-Q3	KxP
51	K-B3	R-K5
52	R-R4	R-K7
53	R-Q4ch	K-B4
54	P-N4ch	K-N4
55	R-Q5ch	K-B3
56	R-K2	R-K8
57	P-B3	R-KN8
58	K-Q4	R-K8
59	R-B2ch	K-N3
60	K-Q5	R-K6
61	R-B6ch	K-N4
62	R-B7	P-R4
63	R-N7ch	K-R5
64	K-B4	K-R6
65	R-R7ch	K-N7
66	R-KN7	Resigns

Many a player below the master level can be intimidated out of his wits by a sacrificial opening, even if he knows it to be unsound. The idea that his opponent will have the initiative for a long time, at whatever the cost, is deflating: instead of making grand combinations himself, he will need to defend carefully against his opponent's combinations, and very few even of the better players are fully confident in defense. The knowledge that his opponent is privy to reams of analysis—that he knows by rote variations that he always meant to look at himself but never could find the time—is terrifying. If he falls into some elementary trap and loses the game, his friends will laugh at him for his ignorance, and if he wins those same friends will attribute his victory to his opponent's choice of an unsound opening. It is no use for him to make new friends—all chess players are like that.

Grandmasters, of course, are far more difficult to intimidate

—that is one of the reasons they are grandmasters. For the most part they love to see their opponents play unsound openings against them; the idea that they will have to defend for a time doesn't bother them in the least if they know that they will be rewarded for their troubles by a full point on the score table. And by an "unsound" opening a grandmaster means not only those where material is surrendered directly, but those in which structural weaknesses are incurred for insufficient compensation.

Nevertheless some players, when confronted with an opponent they think much stronger than themselves, will try wild, little-known variations with the thought that in more conventional lines they are sure to be outplayed in the long run. They hope not so much that their opponent will be intimidated as that he will be overconfident; that, contemptuous of the "unsound" variation that has been played against him he will not work as hard as he ought to to find the most precise moves. To feel that, in a given position, any move is good enough is an excellent shortcut to find the one move that isn't.

The following game was played in one of the preliminary sections of the 1958 Olympiad in Munich. The match between the American team, on its way to the finals, and the South African, on its way to the Class C consolation group, was not expected to be one of the more memorable encounters of the event. As it happened, it wasn't, but for a while it looked as if the biggest upset of the Olympiad was in the making. It was remarked that if at the end of two hours' play the four games had been adjudicated, the South Africans would have gotten at least two and a half points and probably three.

The most noteworthy of the games was taking place on third board, where former United States champion Larry Evans was playing K. Grivainis. Grivainis, an émigré to South Africa from Soviet-controlled Latvia, was the South Africans' best scorer at Munich, but under ordinary circumstances no match for grandmaster Evans. Grivainis chose to play the little-seen Latvian Gambit (also known as the Greco Countergambit) not, one account assures us, out of sentimental attachment to the country of his birth, but because he had made a careful study of it in the hope that he might catch some grandmaster napping. "The opening is not really quite as bad as it looks," wrote South African team member and journalist B. F. Kirby in *Chess Life*, "and no player in his right senses would have wasted too much time in studying it!" During the game, however, Evans must have been kicking himself for his failure to have "wasted" more time doing just that.

LATVIAN GAMBIT

	White	*Black*
	Evans	Grivainis
1	P-K4	P-K4
2	N-KB3	P-KB4
3	PxP	. . .

When confronted with an opening such as the Latvian Gambit, a master or grandmaster will often feel insulted—an illogical reaction, perhaps, but understandable nonetheless. Once he has accepted the fact that the simpleton across the table really thinks he can get away with *that* against a player of his caliber, he will settle down to find the best way to reply, and most of the time he will hit upon a plausible course of action. Sometimes, if he thinks that his opponent is more familiar with published analyses than he is, he will try to steer the game into uncharted waters, so that both players will be on their own resources. This is probably why Evans rejected 3 NxP and 3 B-B4 here, both of which are thought to give White the advantage.

Larry Evans has been called "the American Korchnoi" because, like the Russian Korchnoi, Victor, he often chooses to steal a pawn in the opening, defend in the middle game, and win in the ending. Here, however, his defensive efforts succeed only with a good deal of help from Grivainis.

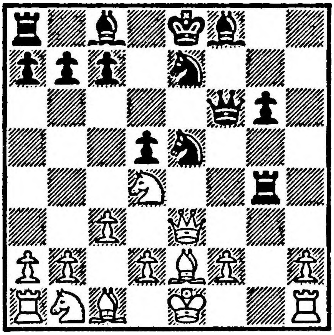
3 . . .	P-K5
4 N-Q4	. . .

And here both 4 N-K5 (4 . . . N-KB3; 5 B-K2, P-Q3; 6 B-R5ch, K-K2; 7 N-B7, Q-K1; 8 NxR, QxB; 9 QxQ, NxQ; 10 P-KN4, N-KB3; 11 R-N1, etc.) and 4 Q-K2 (4 . . . Q-K2; 5 N-Q4, Q-K4; 6 N-N5, etc.) are safer. With the text, White hopes to secure a material advantage immediately.

4 . . .	Q-B3
5 Q-R5ch	P-KN3
6 PxP	PxP
7 Q-Q5	N-K2
8 QxKP	. . .

"White is now two pawns up but the storm which breaks over his head is something like a hurricane." (Kirby)

8 . . .	R-R5
9 P-KN4	P-Q4
10 Q-Q3	RxNP
11 P-QB3	QN-B3
12 B-K2	N-K4
13 Q-K3	. . .



GRIVAINIS

EVANS

13 . . .	R-K5?

But now 13 . . . P-QB4 wins outright, because after 14 BxR (14 N-B3, R-K5), BxB; 15 N-N5, N-B4 traps White's Queen.

14 Q-N3 B-N5
15 P-KB4 . . .

"By this time a crowd had gathered round the board. Tal, no doubt seeing all sorts of fancy winning combinations, had already asked Grivainis for the score and an interview which he could send to the Latvian periodical to which he contributed a chess column. Bisguier [against whom Kirby was playing in the match] returned to our board with the news that there was a wild mix-up on board three and he was glad that it was Evans and not he that was in it." (Kirby)

15 . . . BxB?

Here Black had a pleasant choice between two winning lines: 15 . . . Q-R3!; 16 P-B4 (or 16 P-Q3, RxBch!), QxBP; 17 N-QB3, QxN; 18 PxN, RxP; etc., or 15 . . . N-B4!!; 16 PxN, Q-N4! 17 P-KR4, Q-R4; 18 Q-N2, NxN; 19 PxN, RxNch; 20 QxR, BxQ; etc.

16 NxB N-B2?

Although 16 . . . N-B4 no longer wins, it is still better than the text (17 PxN, RxNch!, with attacking possibilities).

17 P-Q3 R-K3
18 Q-N4 N-B4
19 O-O O-O-O
20 N-N3 K-N1
21 P-QR4 . . .

"Here Evans offered a draw, possibly out of respect for a gallant foe, and Grivainis, who had by now clearly lost the thread, should have grasped it with both hands. However he had developed delusions of grandeur and refused. He was soon punished for his 'hubris'!" (Kirby)

21 . . .	B-Q3
22 N-R3	R-R1
23 N-N5	R-R5
24 Q-B3	N/2-R3
25 NxB	PxN
26 B-Q2	N-N5
27 KR-K1!	NxRP
28 QxQP	RxRch
29 RxR	R-R1
30 NxN	PxN
31 R-K2	Q-R3?
32 R-K7!	Q-N3ch
33 K-B2	Resigns

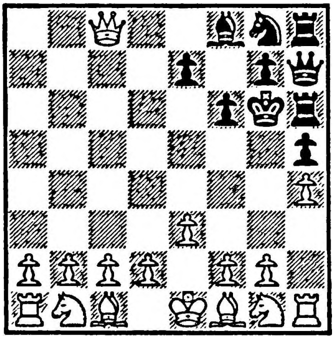
III

Only A Draw

Not so many years ago two of the competitors in the United States Intercollegiate championship—both of them now well-known masters—ambled up to the bulletin board on which the pairings for the next round were posted, and discovered that they were scheduled to play one another. Neither of them liked that one bit, principally because each considered the other the most dangerous of the opponents he could have drawn. They put their heads together, concocted several compelling reasons why the pairing should be changed, and went off to plead their case before the tournament director.

The director, however, knew very well that the match-up was an entirely logical one, and ruled that the two had to play each other whether they liked it or not. From this position no amount of argument, even when bolstered by the threats of the two players to withdraw from the tournament, could move him. The pair finally went off in a collective huff, determined to teach him a lesson.

At the beginning of the round the director was relieved to see the two young troublemakers take their place opposite one another at board one. He suspected, of course, that they had probably agreed beforehand to make a perfunctory draw rather than face one another in earnest, but at least they had not openly defied his authority as they had threatened to do. His relief, however, was short-lived: soon others of the competitors in the tournament began to gather around the top board, and from the demeanor of the onlookers it was obvious that something screwy was going on. He elbowed his way through the crowd to have a look at the game, in which the following position had arisen:



A quick glance at one of their score sheets revealed that play had thus far proceeded:

LOYD'S OPENING

	White	*Black*
	White	Black
1	P-K3	P-QR4
2	Q-R5	R-R3
3	QxQRP	P-R4
4	QxBP	QR-R3

The opening stage was now apparently over because the pace of the play had slowed considerably and both protagonists were deep in thought. The game continued:

5 P-KR4	P-B3
6 QxPch	K-B2
7 QxNP	Q-Q6
8 QxN	Q-R2
9 QxB	K-N3

White now played the paralyzing stroke 10 Q-K6!, looked around in obvious self-satisfaction, and started his opponent's clock. The expression on Black's face, intended to convey to the spectators the desperate nature of his quest for a playable move, was so funny that several of the bystanders literally laughed themselves to tears. The tournament director himself was laughing so hard it was all that he could do to articulate clearly the appropriate phrase "Double forfeit," and he was still holding his sides as he marched off to mark up the two zeroes on the scoretable.[*] *Stultum facit fortuna quem vult perdere,* as the saying is, or, in plain English, some guys are just too clever for their own good.

This deplorable incident (and the humor of it can hardly conceal the bad sportsmanship and stupidity that lie beneath) was recently paralled in an international tournament, the 1972 World Student Team championship in Graz, Austria. The World Student championships have long enjoyed an importance well above that the quality of the chess produced in them would merit, both as training tournaments for young players (many of the world's top grandmasters got their first international experience in these events) and as yet another battleground in the continuing chess rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In the match at Graz between the United States and West Germany the following game was played at first board between the American Ken Rogoff and the West German grandmaster Robert Huebner (whose excellent showing in the 1971 Interzonal tournament at Palma de Mallorca was one of the biggest surprises of that event).

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[*] This episode, to which I was an eyewitness, took place pretty much as I have reported it, except that I don't really remember whether the tournament director actually did impose the double forfeit. If he didn't, he should have, if not for any violation of the chess rules, then for heavy humor and bad acting. For those not familiar with this brilliant ten-move stalemate construction, it is the work of the American composer Sam Loyd.—D.D.

ENGLISH OPENING

White	*Black*
Huebner	Rogoff
1 P-QB4	**Drawn**

It was Huebner who offered the draw, explaining that it was in protest against a decision made by the captain of his own team. Huebner, who had several adjourned games to finish later in the week, wanted the round off to rest, but his captain had insisted that he play against the United States, suggesting, however, that if he liked he could offer his opponent a quick draw. Rogoff, who had the black pieces against a grandmaster, saw no reason to decline—a decision in which the American captain, Pal Benko, concurred—but wanted to make a few more moves, for form's sake. Huebner for his part insisted that the draw be agreed upon straightaway, and so the players signed their scoresheets and presented them to the tournament director, who refused to accept them. "So they returned to the board," wrote Benko in an article in *Chess Life and Review,* "and concocted a silly game in which both sacrificed all their pieces. Again they handed their scoresheets to the arbiter."

The matter then went to the tournament committee, which threatened to declare a double forfeit unless the players apologized and sat down to play a real game. Rogoff agreed, but Huebner, pointing out that the rules did not specify how many moves needed to be made before the players could agree to a draw, refused to comply. He was thereupon forfeited, and the Americans gained the easiest point of the tournament.

These two incidents have in common the blatancy with which the players involved declared their intentions. In every international tournament, however, as well as in every tournament of importance down even to the level of the local club championship, there are several games played in which the opponents are as little inclined to engage in genuine conflict. The people who go through the motions in these games are every bit as cynical, but more subtle.

The following game is taken from the 1963 U.S.S.R. championship in Leningrad. The humor in it is apparent only when one visualizes the circumstances under which it was played: the darkened theater, the brightly lit stage on which the combatants are seated, the huge wallboards behind them that enable the highly sophisticated Russian audience to follow the action move by move. The hushed expectancy in which the crowd must have awaited the next surprising stroke in this battle of giants makes itself felt even through the dry medium of the printed score:

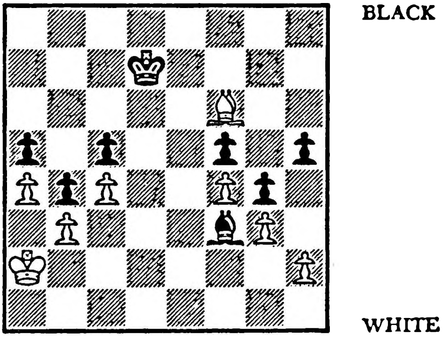
FOUR KNIGHTS' GAME

	White	*Black*
	Bronstein	Cholmov
1	P-K4	P-K4
2	N-KB3	N-QB3
3	N-B3	N-B3
4	B-N5	N-Q5
5	NxN	PxN
6	P-K5	PxN
7	PxN	QxP
8	QPxP	Q-K4ch
9	Q-K2	QxQch
10	BxQ	P-Q4
11	B-KB4	P-QB3
12	P-B4	B-K3
13	PxP	BxP
14	O-O	B-B4
15	B-Q3	O-O
16	KR-K1	KR-K1
17	P-QR3	P-KR3
18	K-B1	K-B1
19	P-KB3	RxRch
20	RxR	R-K1
21	RxR	KxR
22	K-K2	Drawn

Salo Flohr, one of the foremost Soviet annotators, refers to such games as "titanic struggles." The spectators who have paid their way in to the tournament hall doubtless have other names for them.

If during the course of a chess game a player is offered a draw, he is fully entitled, legally and morally, to decline the offer if he thinks that he still has a chance to win. If he decides to play on in a position where he has no reasonable winning chances only because to do so entails no risk, he is subject to the moral opprobrium of his opponent and the spectators, but he is still within his rights, so far as the laws of chess are concerned.

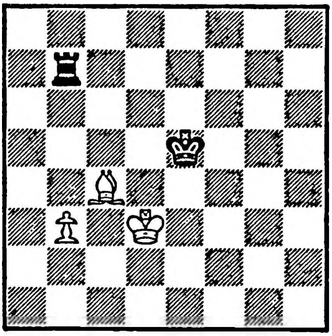
There have been instances in the history of chess when a player chose to exercise his legal right to play on, even when to do so appeared downright indecent. The most famous such incident brought together two of the most stubborn men ever to play the game, Mikhail Tchigorin of Russia and Dr. Siegbert Tarrasch of Germany. Their encounter in the Vienna tournament of 1898 came down to an ending with a symmetrical pawn formation and Bishops of opposite colors. Hours of fruitless maneuvering brought no winning chances for either side. Finally, in the following position



Tchigorin got fed up and offered a draw. Tarrasch refused! Tchigorin knew Tarrasch well, and was half expecting that; he calmly removed his Bishop from the board and said, in broken German, "Go ahead. Win." Tarrasch proceeded to reappraise the position in the light of this startling development, and then tamely agreed to a draw.

A more modern anecdote of the same kind must be told with the names of the protagonists omitted, as the villain of the piece is still very much with us. Several years ago a prominent American master was striving to boost his U.S.C.F. rating in order to qualify for the United States championship. He needed so few points that he decided he could secure them virtually without risk, by playing in a tournament in the hinterlands where he would encounter no serious opposition. The rating system, which awards points for winning games in proportion to the strength of the vanquished, also stipulates a minimum gain from any victory no matter how weak the opposition may be. According to the master's calculations six victories in the six-round weekend tournament, even against the low-rated local players likely to show up for the event he had so carefully selected, would suffice for his purposes. Of course, if he lost to any of his opponents, or even drew with one, his rating would plummet to the depths.

All went according to plan until the final round, when he faced the local champ, a sprightly octogenarian. The master secured a slight advantage in the opening, and retained it throughout the middle game and well into the ending. He even obtained some material advantage—a Rook in exchange for a Bishop and pawn. But the old fellow continued to offer staunch resistance, and the position gradually simplified. Exchange followed exchange until a book draw was in sight—something like the following:



With a lone Rook against Bishop and pawn the frustrated master had nothing left to bank on except—his opponent's advanced age! Not that he really hoped the man would die; there was too little chance of that. But perhaps if he played on long enough the old man would grow sleepy, and then . . .

The old man didn't. The game was finally drawn after about 120 moves, and the gallant defender emerged from it not only with half a point on the score table and some additional points on his rating, but with a new insight into human nature.

As a footnote to this gloomy tale we append the following narrative, taken from Larry Evans' book *Modern Chess Brilliancies* (New York, 1970). Remarking on a resignable position that arose in one of the games annotated in that entertaining work, Evans writes:

> Black plays on because he is hoping for a miracle. At Havana 1952, one of my first great international tournaments, I learned at first hand the full meaning of Tartakower's dictum that "you can't win by resigning." The Dutch master Prins was a piece down against one of the Cuban lesser lights, Quesada; his position was obviously hopeless, but he insisted on adjourning the game. When I asked Prins why he didn't resign immediately, he replied that anything can happen. Sure enough, his opponent obliged the next day by dying of a heart attack. Such drastic solutions to the problem of saving a lost game do not readily present themselves. Nor does such a stubborn attitude endear a master to his colleagues.

A pointed, if gruesome, anecdote, unfortunately somewhat polished in the telling. Juan Quesada did in fact die of a heart attack about midway through the 1952 Havana event—"his funeral was attended by all of the masters participating," as the tournament book notes. The last game of his life was against the Dutch master Lodewijk Prins—and he won it! After his blunder on the 34th move Prins was doubtless too discouraged to continue play, and failed to calculate through to the ensuing cardiac arrest that, had he foreseen it, might have saved the game for him. He therefore resigned rather than adjourn, only later to learn for himself "the full meaning of Tartakower's dictum." Here is the game:

TWO KNIGHTS' DEFENSE

	White Quesada	*Black* Prins
1	P-K4	P-K4
2	N-KB3	N-QB3
3	B-B4	N-B3
4	O-O	P-Q3?
5	N-N5	P-Q4
6	PxP	N-QR4
7	B-N5ch	P-B3
8	PxP	PxP
9	B-K2	P-KR3
10	N-KB3	P-K5
11	N-K1	B-Q3
12	P-Q3	Q-B2
13	PxP	NxP
14	B-Q3	N-B4
15	P-QN4	NxB
16	NxN	N-B5
17	R-K1ch	B-K3
18	P-N3	O-O-O
19	Q-B3	Q-Q2
20	N-B3	KR-K1
21	P-N5	B-KN5
22	PxP	BxQ
23	PxQch	KxP
24	B-B4	N-R6
25	BxB	KxB
26	RxR	RxR
27	N-K1	B-N5
28	P-B3	B-K3
29	R-Q1ch	K-B2
30	K-B2	R-QN1
31	R-Q4	R-N7
32	R-QR4	NxP
33	N-Q3	R-N2
34	N-B5	R-N5??
35	N-R6ch	Resigns ???

One afternoon in the spring of 1964 I was sitting alone in the quarters of New York City's Marshall Chess Club, meditating on the Eternal Verities, when in walked one of America's most popular grandmasters with a copy of the *New York Times* under his arm. "Hi," he said. "Have you seen the Tal game?"

I nodded. There was no need for me to ask which Tal game—it was Tal vs. Lajos Portisch of Hungary from the

Interzonal tournament then in progress at Amsterdam, which had appeared in the paper that morning. "Isn't it incredible?" he asked rhetorically. "I just played it over coming down on the subway [he meant in his head, of course], and unless there's a misprint somewhere . . . Let's analyze it."

"Sure," I replied, recognizing the invitation as one to watch him analyze.

"I don't understand why he [meaning Portisch] doesn't go *here,*" said the grandmaster, at a point soon after Tal had made his first sacrifice. "Isn't he perfectly safe? What's Tal got?" I admitted, as if such an admission were necessary, that I didn't know.

"This is ridiculous," he barked a few moves later. "What if White just goes here and here and here—doesn't he come out a full Rook ahead? Can't anybody defend himself anymore?" And at nearly every successive move he paused to demonstrate, to his own satisfaction and mine, another way Portisch could have turned back the assault and emerged with an easy win.

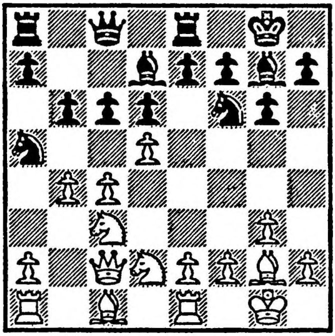
After about half an hour of this, a second grandmaster walked in. "Hi," he said, "I see you're looking at the Tal game. I've just spent six hours analyzing it"—and he proceeded to show us what he had found.

It was amazing—a totally different picture emerged. Not only had he turned up utterly bewildering combinations for Black against alternative moves White might have chosen, but showed that Portisch's defense had been almost flawless—that if he had, in fact, played any of Grandmaster No. 1's facile suggestions, he would have gotten his head handed to him in short order.

The truth, apparently, lies somewhere between the two opposed contentions. Portisch's defense was far from perfect, but when one considers that it was conducted under the pressure of a time limit against one of the greatest attacking players of all time, it seems worthy of high praise. The game itself I have always regarded as beyond praise—like one of those natural phenomena one looks at, unless one is a great poet, with mouth firmly closed.—D. D.

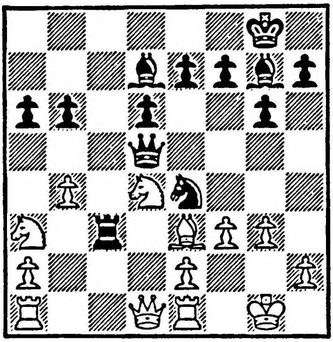
KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Portisch	**Tal**
1 N-KB3	N-KB3
2 P-KN3	P-Q3
3 P-Q4	P-KN3
4 B-N2	B-N2
5 O-O	O-O
6 P-B4	B-N5
7 N-B3	Q-B1
8 R-K1	R-K1
9 Q-N3	N-B3
10 P-Q5	N-QR4
11 Q-R4	P-QN3
12 N-Q2	B-Q2
13 Q-B2	P-B3
14 P-QN4	. . .

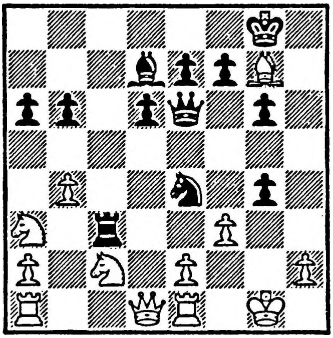


14 . . .	NxBP
15 NxN	PxP
16 N-R3	P-Q5
17 BxR	QxB
18 N/B-N5	R-QB1

19 Q-Q1	N-K5
20 P-B3	P-QR3
21 NxP/Q4	Q-Q4
22 B-K3	R-B6



23 N/Q-B2	Q-KB4
24 P-N4	Q-K3
25 B-Q4	P-KR4
26 BxB	PxP



By this time, according to an eyewitness report, a huge crowd had gathered around the board, including most of the other competitors in the tournament. A Yugoslav journalist offered to bet American grandmaster Pal Benko that Tal would not lose. Benko wisely declined.

27	N-Q4	Q-Q4
28	PxN	QxKP
29	N-B3	Q-K6ch
30	K-R1	B-B3
31	R-KB1	RxN
32	Q-B1	PxN
33	QxB	QxP
34	R-KN1	KxB
35	QR-K1	Q-Q7
36	R-Q1	Q-K7
37	QR-Q1	Q-Q7
38	R-Q1	Q-K7
39	QR-K1	Drawn

Portisch thought Black's mass of center pawns sufficient compensation for a Rook.

IV

The Chess Clock

The biggest difference between the casual sort of chess, played by millions throughout the world who have never even seen a chess tournament, and the serious variety, played in organized competitions with prizes at stake, is the time element. In an offhand game, the only force that compels a player to move within a reasonable time is social pressure: if he habitually takes too long between moves, eventually no one will want to play with him. In a tournament game, on the other hand, he is allowed to take as much time as he likes on any of his moves—up to a point. He is allotted a specified period of time in which to make a certain number of moves—the usual time limit in international chess today is forty moves in two and a half hours—and, although he can allocate his time within that period however he likes, if he does not complete the stipulated number of moves within the time limit, he forfeits the game.

The first mechanical device designed to time chess games was invented by an Englishman, Thomas Bright Wilson of Manchester, and first used in the London tournament of 1883.

The *Encyclopedia of Chess* quotes a contemporary description:

> This apparatus consists of two small clocks, one for the black and one for the white player. The clocks are fastened together on a movable iron table, slightly sloping from the centre, and so arranged that at the time one clock is going, the pendulum of the other is thrown out of the perpendicular and thus stopped.

The machinery was obviously crude, but in principle it was the same arrangement as that in use today; the double-faced clock seems to a modern tournament competitor as much a part of the game as the board and men.

The time limit in the London tournament of 1883 was fifteen moves an hour. The necessity for some kind of time limit had become apparent very quickly as soon as formal competition began, with the London tournament of 1851. In that event one player in particular, Elijah Williams, took so long between his moves that he provoked at least one of his opponents, Howard Staunton, to loud, if unavailing, protest. (Staunton was also the author of the tournament book, and recorded his indignation for posterity.) Staunton subsequently demonstrated the sincerity of his outrage when he forfeited a later match against Williams out of sheer frustration.

The problem of slow-moving opponents was so acute that one of England's top players, Henry Thomas Buckle (1821–62), better known for his *History of Civilization*, soon refused to play any serious chess at all, and devoted his chess energies entirely to skittles games in coffeehouses, where the pace was more to his liking. If one of his opponents in that form of competition took too long to move, Buckle could encourage him with such witticisms as "Come, Sir, the slowness of genius is hard to bear, but the slowness of mediocrity is intolerable!"

The first attempts to impose a time limit in chess sought to restrict the amount of time a player could take for a single move. In the match between Daniel Harrwitz and John Jacob

Lowenthal played in 1852, each competitor was allowed a maximum of twenty minutes a move; Lowenthal lost, and blamed his defeat on the necessity to move quickly in critical situations.

The match between Adolf Anderssen and Baron Ignatz Kolisch, played in 1862, was the first in which an attempt was made to time a whole cycle of moves, and so allow the players to make easy moves quickly and thereby save time for the harder ones. An hourglass was used, and each antagonist compelled to make twenty-four moves in two hours. This method was obviously far from accurate, and the sand glasses might have proved very awkward to manipulate during a scramble in which both players were short of time (there is no record of how Anderssen and Kolisch managed to cope with the new arrangement). Other experiments, among them one in which a referee sat by the board and recorded with the aid of a stopwatch the amount of time consumed by each player, proved even less practicable.

It wasn't until the use of a mechanical clock became widespread that the idea of a time limit for tournament chess became palatable. Even then there was resistance, and as late as 1906 a major tournament was held at Nuremberg (a city famed, ironically, for its clocks!) in which the time limit was all but abolished. The contemporary *Year Book of Chess* offers the following account:

> The rules were: No time limit for the first six hours of a game, afterwards 15 moves an hour and a penalty of one shilling for each minute in excess of this. To avoid these absurd restrictions Leonhardt and Przepiorka at a certain juncture of their game agreed to make a number of meaningless moves so as to escape the fine and gain time. Other players copied this procedure. The most amusing incident was in the game Salwe-Tarrasch. Not only did Dr. Tarrasch suffer defeat in this game, but having consumed a great deal of time in endeavoring to stave off this disaster, had to pay four pounds and fifteen shillings for the privilege! After this the rule was altered as follows: No time limit shall be enforced the first day, but only on adjourned games.

This was the last such attempt to return to the carefree days of the earlier nineteenth century; ever since, the clock has played a part in deciding the outcome of every important chess event. Not only has its use made chess a fairer game, but it has led to many exciting situations, some of which provide the material of the following pages.

Although the use of clocks in chess tournaments goes back nearly a hundred years, the procedure by which a player may claim a forfeit when his opponent exceeds the time limit has not yet been spelled out to everyone's satisfaction—subtle changes are introduced almost every time the FIDE rules committee holds one of its annual meetings. Apart from the bizarre questions that may arise,* there are many basic matters as yet unresolved: Must a player have a complete and accurate score in order to claim a time forfeit? If he hasn't one at the time his opponent oversteps, is he entitled to reconstruct one, and if so, under what circumstances? What is an accurate score, anyhow? (The score sheets of many players are all but illegible from beginning to end.) When a player is in time trouble, is he permitted simply to check off the moves on his score sheet as they are made, instead of writing them down? (The laws of chess state that a player *must* keep score—is this stricture suspended if there is no time left to make the moves and record them too?) What, indeed, is time trouble? What may be severe time trouble for one player may be rather mild for a second, and all the time in the world for a third.

Another basic area of difficulty involves the role of the referee. Must the player himself claim a forfeit before the referee can act? Or can the referee, with an accurate score of his own, forfeit a player when he sees that he has exceeded the time limit? Can a referee even inform a player that he is *out* of time trouble? Often a player in time pressure will pass the time control successfully without knowing it, and will continue to move rapidly for five or ten more moves, to his opponent's obvious advantage. Should the referee intervene?

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*The standard example is that of a player who, in extreme time pressure, mates his opponent. Before he can stop the clock (or before his hand has quitted the mating piece) his flag falls. Who wins? Answer—The situation on the board takes precedence over that on the clock; mate ends the game. (But what if his hand with the [potential] mating piece in it is still in the air while the flag is falling?)

The 1957 match between Donald Byrne and Samuel Reshevsky (two players notoriously prone to time-pressure) witnessed one of the most acrimonious disputes in American chess history, and brought some of these questions to the fore, although it hardly resolved them. The rules under which that match was played threw all the responsibility to claim any time forfeits onto the protagonists themselves. Not only did a player need to have a complete and legible score in order to make a claim, he could not do so until it was his turn to move (the absurdity of this proviso is evident—theoretically a player who exceeded the time limit need only to never move and his opponent could never claim the forfeit).

In the first game of the match both players got into severe time pressure. Byrne's flag fell. All the spectators, their eyes fixed on the clock, saw it, as did, of course, referee Hans Kmoch, who had the best seat in the house. Only Reshevsky, intent on the position on the board, did not notice, and offered Byrne a draw. Byrne accepted, whereupon Kmoch genially informed him that he might have claimed the game on time. "I claim it," Reshevsky replied, for whatever good it might do him.

The finish to the second game was even wilder. The players again got into a furious time scramble, and this time both overstepped, first Byrne, then Reshevsky. Neither player noticed that the other's flag had fallen. Seated in the front row of spectators, however, was Mrs. Samuel Reshevsky, who, remembering that one of the players needed to say something before the referee could act, rose to her feet as if inspired. "I claim the game," she shouted, "on behalf of my husband." Mr. Reshevsky promptly entered a claim on his own behalf. Byrne, whose turn it was to move, glanced at Reshevsky's fallen flag and entered a claim of his own.

Pandemonium broke loose. It is hardly necessary to state Byrne's objections to Mrs. Reshevsky's unprecedented intrusion into her husband's chess affairs, nor that he was unimpressed by the argument, advanced by some biblically minded spectator that, as man and wife are one flesh, Mrs. R. was technically a participant in the game, and had acted within her rights. The matter was referred to an ad hoc committee for a ruling—a procedure to which Byrne objected so strongly that he temporarily resigned the match. Reshevsky's claims to both the first and second games and Byrne's claim to the second were all disallowed, play eventually resumed, and Reshevsky won.

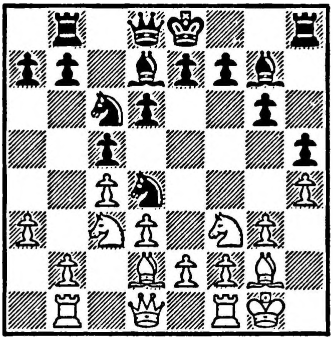
The most interesting game of the match ended, appropriately, in a time forfeit:

ENGLISH OPENING

White	*Black*
Reshevsky	Byrne
1 N-KB3	P-QB4
2 P-QB4	N-QB3
3 P-KN3	P-KN3
4 B-N2	B-N2
5 O-O	P-Q3
6 N-B3	N-R3

The obvious 6 . . . N-B3 leads to a well-analyzed variation of the King's Indian Defense. Byrne attempts to retain control of his Q5 square, at least for the time being.

7 P-Q3	N-B4
8 B-Q2	P-KR4
9 P-KR4	B-Q2
10 R-N1	R-QN1
11 P-R3	KN-Q5

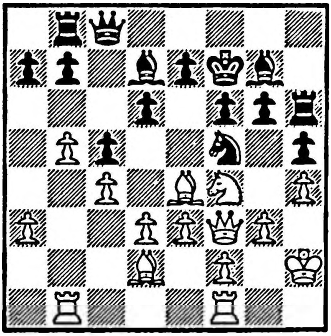


By playing 11 . . . P-R3, in order to meet 12 P-QN4 with 12 . . . PxP; 13 PxP, P-QN4, Black can retain equality in space on the Queenside. The text move is a loss of time.

12 N-KR2!	Q-B1
13 P-QN4	O-O
14 P-N5	N-K4
15 N-Q5	R-K1
16 B-N5	P-B3
17 B-Q2	N-N5

Here 17 . . . B-R6, eliminating White's powerfully posted Bishop, is correct.

18 P-K3	NxN
19 KxN	N-B4
20 N-B4	K-B2
21 B-K4	R-KR1
22 Q-B3	R-R3



23 P-Q4!	. . .

Black has defended himself successfully against potential Knight sacrifices on the Kingside, but remains vulnerable to this sharp action in the center. If now 23 . . . PxP; 24 PxP, NxQP, then 25 BxPch!, RxB; 26 QxRP, B-B4; 27 NxR, BxN; 28 Q-Q5ch, N-K3; 29 QR-K1, and White wins by doubling Rooks on the Kingfile.

23 . . .	P-K4
24 PxKP	QPxP
25 N-Q3	KR-R1
26 B-Q5ch	K-K1
27 Q-N2	N-R3
28 P-B4	N-N5ch
29 K-R1	PxP
30 KPxP	P-N3

The seemingly powerful 30 . . . B-B4 is met by 31 NxP!, e.g. 31 . . . BxR (31 . . . QxN; 32 B-N4, Q-B2; 33 QR-Q1 and 34 KR-K1ch); 32 Q-K2ch, K-Q1; 33 N-K6ch, K-Q2; 34 NxB, etc.

31 Q-K4ch	K-B1
32 QxP	N-R3
33 P-B5!	. . .

With the obvious threat of 34 BxN, followed by mate.

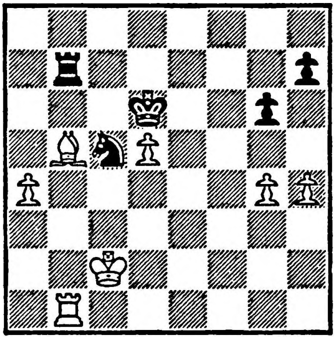
33 . . .	BxP

Or 33 . . . B-K1; 34 N-B4!, BxQ; 35 NxBch, K-K1; 36 QR-K1ch, K-Q1; 37 N-K7!, when White wins back the Queen with a decisive advantage.

34 RxB	QxR
35 N-B4!	R-N1
36 R-K1	R-Q1
37 QxQ	. . .

And in this hopeless position Black overstepped the time limit.

It is obviously as much the business of the tournament player to manage his time intelligently as it is for him to avoid putting his Queen *en prise*. Alexander Alekhine has preached a small sermon on the subject, in the notes to his game against T. H. Tylor in the tournament at Nottingham in 1936, citing himself as the Horrible Example. In the following position



Tylor played 46 . . . NxP, a desperate sacrifice in a hopeless position. Now the simple 47 BxN would have won easily— 47 . . . RxR; 48 KxR, KxP; 49 B-K8!, K-K4; 50 P-R5, K-B5 (50 . . . PxP; 51 BxP); 51 PxP, PxP; 52 B-Q7, etc. Instead, Alekhine played 47 K-Q3??, and after 47 . . . KxP; 48 B-B4ch, K-Q3!; 49 RxR, N-B4ch; 50 K-K3, NxR; etc., the game was a draw. Of 47 K-Q3?? Alekhine wrote:

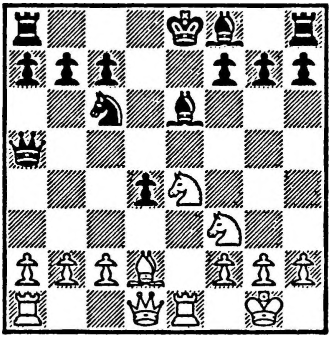
> An awful move, the fact that White was short of time is, to my mind, as little to be considered as an excuse, as for instance the statement of the law-breaker that he was drunk at the moment that he committed the crime. The inability of an experienced master to deal with the clock should be considered as grave a fault as a miscalculation.

Does this mean that the experienced tournament player should never get into time pressure? Not at all. It means rather that he should take no more time than absolutely necessary to solve the problems with which he is confronted. Sometimes the expenditure of what may seem to the casual observer an inordinate amount of time may prove to be completely justified. The following game is a case in point.

Hastings Christmas Congress, 1960–61

TWO KNIGHTS' DEFENSE

	White	*Black*
	Cafferty	Gligorich
1	P-K4	P-K4
2	N-KB3	N-QB3
3	B-B4	N-B3
4	P-Q4	PxP
5	O-O	NxP
6	R-K1	P-Q4
7	BxP	QxB
8	N-B3	Q-QR4
9	NxN	B-K3
10	B-Q2	. . .



In his 1834 match against Charles de La Bourdonnais, Alexander McDonnell drove his opponent to distraction by taking as long as an hour and a half over a single move.

Gligorich took an hour and a half over this move, and how Cafferty must have loved it. The prospect of the famous grandmaster blundering away his Queen in time pressure must have danced in his head as he paced the tournament hall like the visions of sugar plums in the poem. Alas, although it was the Hastings Christmas Congress, Gligorich was no Santa Claus.

The explanation for Gligorich's "big think" (as Bobby Fischer calls such pauses for reflection) is probably that he had already been surprised several times during the first ten moves, and more or less entirely unprepared to face the position that actually arose. When he answered 1 P-K4 with 1 . . . P-K4 he had doubtless expected his opponent to play the Ruy Lopez. When he answered 3 B-B4 with 3 . . . N-B3, he had probably anticipated that his opponent would reply 4 N-N5. And White's tenth move, B-Q2, is also far less usual than either 10 N/4-N5 or 10 B-N5. Although Gligorich is one of the most respected authorities on the openings among the grandmasters, he can hardly be expected to remember every obscure variation of an opening line he may face once in five years. The move 10 B-Q2 clearly acted as a signal to him that a critical point of the game had been reached.

And the position is complicated. Apart from the move he finally selected, it is likely that he pondered the consequences of 10 . . . B-N5, 10 . . . Q-N3, and the best-known reply to 10 B-Q2, 10 . . . Q-KB4. And he may well have remembered that none of these moves (including the one he chose) is thought to give Black a satisfactory game!

10 . . .	**Q-Q4**
11 B-N5	**B-K2**
12 BxB	**KxB**
13 Q-Q3	**. . .**

But now 13 P-B4! poses many more problems for Black. After 13 . . . QxP (13 . . . PxPe.p.; 14 Q-B2!) 14 R-QB1, Q-Q4; 15 R-B5, Q-Q2; 16 Q-B1, QR-Q1; 17 P-QN4! White has a big advantage. From here on, Gligorich has an easy life, despite the impending time pressure.

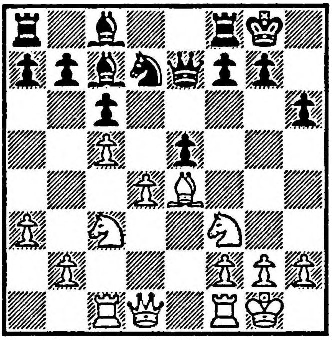
13 . . .	QR-Q1
14 QR-Q1	K-Q2
15 NxQP	K-B1
16 NxN	QxN/3
17 Q-K3	RxR
18 RxR	QxP
19 R-QB1	R-Q1
20 P-KR3	QxNP
21 Q-B4	Q-N3
22 N-B5	Q-Q3
23 Q-K4	B-Q4
24 QxRP	Q-KN3
25 QxQ	PxQ
26 P-QR3	P-QN3
27 N-R4	P-B4
28 N-B3	B-B3
29 R-K1	R-Q6
30 R-K3	RxR
31 PxR	P-QN4
32 K-B2	P-N5
33 PxP	PxP
Resigns	

This next example is even more telling because it shows grandmaster Viktor Korchnoi of the Soviet Union indulging in two “big thinks,” only two moves apart. The game was played at the 1963 José Capablanca Memorial tournament in Havana.

QUEEN’S GAMBIT DECLINED

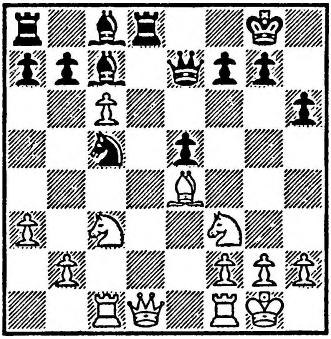
White	*Black*
Korchnoi	Robatsch
1 P-Q4	N-KB3
2 P-QB4	P-K3
3 N-KB3	P-Q4

	White Korchnoi	*Black* Robatsch
4	B-N5	P-KR3
5	BxN	QxB
6	N-B3	P-B3
7	P-K3	N-Q2
8	B-Q3	B-N5
9	O-O	Q-K2
10	R-B1	O-O
11	P-QR3	B-Q3
12	P-B5	B-B2
13	P-K4	PxP
14	BxP	P-K4



Korchnoi thought for an hour here, mostly, as he said later, about 15 R-K1 and its consequences. He saw that the variation 15 R-K1, P-B4; 16 B-Q5ch, PxB; 17 NxQP, Q-Q1; 18 NxB, QxN; 19 PxP gives White an excellent game, but was less confident of his chances after 15 R-K1, Q-Q1; 16 B-N1, PxP; 17 N-K4. He finally disgarded the Rook move in favor of the equally plausible text.

15	P-Q5	NxP
16	PxP	R-Q1



Korchnoi was expecting 16 . . . NxB; 17 N-Q5, Q-Q3; 18 PxP, BxP; 19 NxB, QR-B1; 20 QxQ, NxQ; 21 NxP, which leaves White a pawn ahead but with a hard life in prospect because his Knight on B7 is so awkwardly placed. The move in the text took him by surprise, and prompted him to take another hour and twenty minutes before he finally played

17 N-Q5 . . .

This left him with five minutes in which to play the next twenty-three moves. His play from now till the end of the game is apparently flawless, however, although his opponent might well have set him more difficult problems to solve (see the following notes).

17 . . .	**Q-Q3**
18 NxB	**QxN**
19 RxN!	**RxQ**
20 PxP!	**RxRch**
21 KxR	**QxP**
22 BxQ	**BxB**
23 NxP	**R-Q1**
24 P-QN4	**R-Q8ch**
25 K-K2	**R-QR8**
26 R-R5	**P-R3**

Here, for example, 26 . . . BxP offered more counterplay.

27 P-N3	B-N7
28 N-Q3	B-B8ch

And here 28 . . . R-R7ch was more likely to have led White astray; 29 K-K3, B-B8; 30 RxP, R-K7ch; 31 K-B3, R-K1; 32 R-Q6, R-R1, for example, is far from clear. Best seems 29 K-K1, B-B6; 30 N-B1—not an easy line to find in time pressure.

29 K-Q2	K-R2
30 RxP	R-N8
31 K-B2	R-R8
32 P-N5	B-K7
33 P-N6	Resigns

We do not know who holds the record for the most time ever taken over a single move, but this matter, like some others traditionally obscure, is not beyond *all* conjecture. In the position diagramed below, East German grandmaster Wolfgang Uhlmann thought for an hour and fifty minutes (!) in a vain quest for some way out of the hopeless mess in which he found himself—"a record which will be almost impossible to beat under normal time controls," wrote Hans Kmoch in *Chess Life and Review*. The game was played at the international tournament in Moscow in 1971.

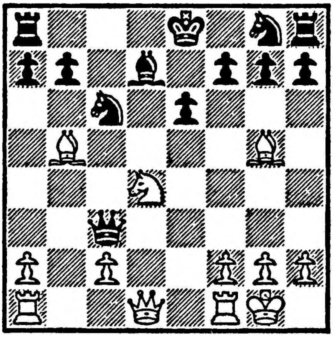
FRENCH DEFENSE

White Tal	*Black* Uhlmann
1 P-K4	P-K3
2 P-Q4	P-Q4
3 N-Q2	P-QB4
4 KN-B3	N-QB3
5 B-N5	QPxP

"Uhlmann is one of the best experts on the French—he knows what he is doing. Someone who does not know as much as Uhlmann would be more inclined to develop a piece by 5 . . N-B3." (Kmoch)

6 NxP	B-Q2
7 B-N5!	Q-R4ch
8 N-B3	PxP
9 NxP	B-N5
10 O-O!	BxN
11 PxB	QxBP?

If Uhlmann had paused for reflection here he would have seen that further development by 11 . . . KN-K2 was absolutely necessary. It is a safe guess that he completely overlooked White's next move.



12 N-B5!	PxN
13 R-K1ch	B-K3
14 Q-Q6	. . .

Threatening 15 QR-Q1.

14 . . .	P-QR3
15 B-Q2	QxP
16 B-N4!	PxB
17 Q-B8ch	K-Q2

18 KR-Q1ch!	K-B2
19 QxR	Resigns

If 19 . . . K-N3, then 20 QR-B1, QxP; 21 RxNch, KxR (or 21 . . . PxR; 23 Q-N8ch, K-R3; 24 B-B5!); 22 R-Q6ch, K-B2; 23 Q-Q8mate.

Chess technique has advanced greatly in recent years, and the typical modern master understands thoroughly certain facets of the game that were the professional secrets of a very few of the leading players fifty years ago. This is a consequence both of the large number of good books available today and of the ever-increasing opportunities for practice against strong opposition. Does this general advance in technical skill include a growing ability to manage the clock?

In every modern tournament the closing minutes of each session bring with them the sight of players with an enormous number of moves to make in only a few seconds. Often both opponents in a given game will be in time pressure, and the pieces will fly about thick and fast while the referee hovers over the table to await the fall of one of the players' flags and the inevitable claims and counterclaims: "This clock is defective—I still have ten seconds to go!" "My opponent doesn't have a correct score—I've already made forty moves!" In short, "I protest!" As some of the best modern players find themselves in time pressure in almost all of their games, it is obvious that we still have a long way to go before judicious management of the clock is second nature to every master.

What of the old days? Unfortunately, as it was seldom the practice before very recently to record the amount of time players consumed either for single moves or for entire games, the evidence on the point is scanty. Although some time-pressure stories, such as the one told about Tarrasch in the introduction to this chapter, have come down to us, the hard data we possess are not sufficient to admit of sound generalizations. What evidence there is, however, points to the conclusion that most masters played faster in the early years of tournament competition than their successors do today.

The book of the international tournament held at St. Petersburg in 1909, with annotations by Emanuel Lasker, is one of the most famous of all time. One unusual feature of this book is that it records the amount of time consumed by each player during the course of the games, and just a casual glance at the figures given suggests that, compared with modern players, the competitors at St. Petersburg moved very rapidly indeed. The fastest of them was the young Russian Dr. Ossip Bernstein, who finished in fifth place in the field of nineteen. The two games that follow are admittedly extreme cases, but serve to point up a trend.

In the first round Bernstein faced Oldrich Duras of Czechoslovakia, who at the outset must surely have ranked as one of the most serious contenders for first prize (he ended up in a tie for second and third with Akiba Rubinstein). The limit was slightly unusual: thirty-seven moves in the first two and a half hours, twenty-three moves in the next one and a half hours, and fifteen moves an hour thereafter—just slightly faster than the current international rate of forty moves in two and a half hours. But apparently Duras and Bernstein had better things to do with their time than play chess!

RUY LOPEZ

White	*Black*
Duras	Bernstein
1 P-K4	P-K4
2 N-KB3	N-QB3
3 B-N5	N-B3
4 P-Q3	. . .

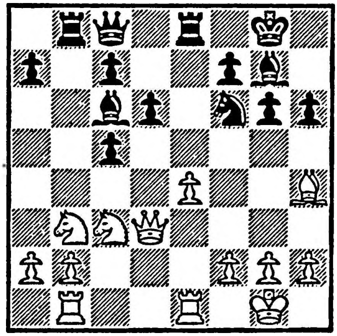
Somewhat lackadaisical; however, Duras shortly changes his mind about what kind of central pawn formation he wants.

4 . . .	P-Q3
5 P-B4	P-KN3
6 P-Q4?!	PxP

7	NxP	B-Q2
8	N-QB3	B-N2
9	BxN	PxB
10	B-N5	P-KR3
11	B-R4	O-O
12	O-O	R-K1
13	R-K1	R-N1
14	R-N1	P-B4
15	N-N3	. . .

Lasker criticizes this move, and recommends 15 N-B3 instead, in order to meet 15 . . . B-B3? with 16 P-K5!, BxN? 17 QxB, PxP; 18 QR-Q1, with a winning game for White. As 15 N-B2 is also plausible, this would be one of the points at which a modern master would take his time. As there is no indication of the amount of time the players consumed for individual moves, we can only conjecture that Duras played 15 N-N3 too hastily.

15	. . .	B-B3
16	Q-Q3	Q-B1!

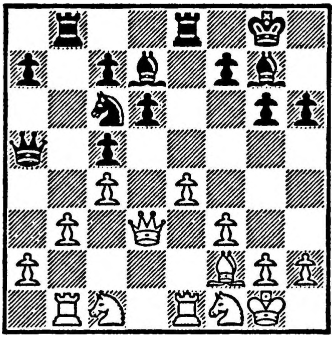


"The commencement of an attack conducted equally well from a strategical and tactical point of view." (Lasker)

17 N-Q2	N-Q2
18 P-QN3	Q-R3
19 Q-B2	Q-R4
20 N-K2?	. . .

After 20 N-Q5, BxN; 21 BPxP, Black would have had the better of it, but the text move is much worse.

20 . . .	N-B1
21 P-B3	N-K3
22 B-B2	B-Q2
23 N-KB1	N-Q5
24 Q-Q3	N-B3
25 N-B1	. . .



25 . . .	Q-R6!

In order to immobilize White's weak QRP and so intensify the bind on the Queenside.

26 N-K3	N-N5
27 Q-Q2	P-QR4
28 N-Q5	NxN
29 KPxN?	. . .

Or 29 BPxN, P-B5!, followed by 30 . . . P-B6, when Black would have won eventually by means of the passed pawn. Now, however, White loses quickly.

29 . . .	RxRch
30 BxR	B-B4
31 N-Q3	BxN
32 QxB	QxRP
33 P-R3	P-R5
34 P-QN4	PxP
35 RxP	RxR
36 BxR	Q-N6
37 Q-Q2	P-R6
38 BxP	QxB
Resigns	

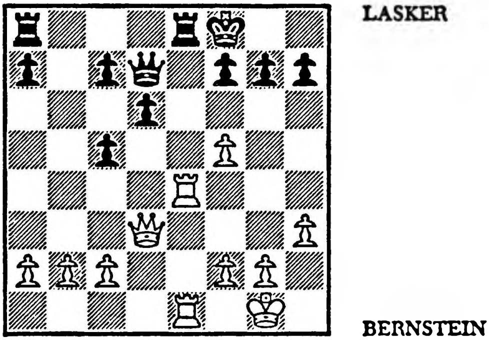
Duras played this whole game in two hours and four minutes, fast by modern standards, especially for a loss. (It is not unusual nowadays for a master to use up nearly all of his time trying to stave off defeat—that is why most positions in which players overstep the time limit are bad or even hopeless anyway.) Bernstein, however, moved much more quickly, and produced one of the best games of the entire tournament in one hour and nineteen minutes!

Midway in the tournament Bernstein faced world champion Emanuel Lasker, the eventual winner. If there was any man against whom he might have been expected to take his time, Lasker was that man.

RUY LOPEZ

White Bernstein	*Black* Lasker	*White* Bernstein	*Black* Lasker
1 P-K4	P-K4	3 B-N5	N-B3
2 N-KB3	N-QB3	4 O-O	P-Q3

White	*Black*
Bernstein	Lasker
5 P-Q4	B-Q2
6 N-B3	B-K2
7 B-N5	PxP
8 NxP	O-O
9 BxQN	PxB
10 Q-Q3	P-B4
11 N-B5	BxN
12 PxB	N-Q2
13 BxB	QxB
14 QR-K1	Q-Q1
15 R-K2	N-B3
16 KR-K1	Q-Q2
17 P-KR3	KR-K1
18 N-K4	NxN
19 RxN	K-B1



20 P-B6!	PxP
21 Q-K3	P-KB4
22 Q-R6ch	K-N1
23 R/4-K3	R-K3
24 RxR	PxR
25 RxP	R-KB1
26 Q-N5ch	Q-N2
27 QxQch	KxQ
28 R-K7ch	R-B2
29 RxRch	KxR
30 K-B1	P-QB5!
31 K-K2	P-B4
32 K-K3	P-Q4
33 P-KB3	K-B3
34 K-B4	P-QR4
35 P-KN4	PxP
36 BPxP	P-R5
37 P-R4	P-Q5
38 K-K4	K-N3
39 K-B4	K-B3
Drawn	

Lasker's defense of his difficult position was, as usual, excellent. It was also time-consuming—the world champion used two hours and thirty minutes, and probably played the

King and pawn ending in mild time pressure. Bernstein, somehow, found it necessary to use only half that time—precisely one hour and fifteen minutes from beginning to end.

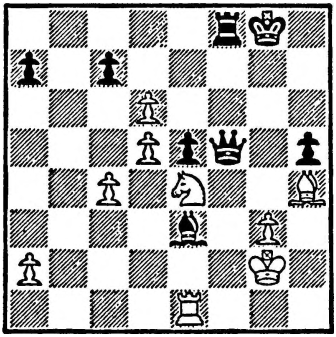
For a player who is himself addicted to time-pressure it is always a pleasure to sit back and watch two of his colleagues mix it up. The wildest time scramble I ever witnessed occurred in one of the games of the U.S.A.-Roumania match at the world student team championship in Leningrad in 1961. I had won my own game fairly quickly, and so was free to follow the action as my teammate Tony Saidy and 15-year-old future grandmaster Florian Gheorghiu matched wits in a chessic version of Beat the Clock.—W.L.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Saidy	Gheorghiu	Saidy	Gheorghiu
1 P-Q4	N-KB3	11 N-Q2	N-B5
2 P-QB4	P-KN3	12 O-O	N-B4
3 N-QB3	B-N2	13 N-N3	P-N3
4 P-K4	P-Q3	14 R-K1	NxBch
5 B-K2	O-O	15 QxN	P-B4
6 N-B3	P-K4	16 PxP	BxP
7 P-Q5	QN-Q2	17 NxN	NPxN
8 B-N5	P-KR3	18 QR-B1	Q-B3
9 B-R4	P-KN4	19 N-K4	Q-N3
10 B-N3	N-R4	20 P-KR3	QR-N1

Believe it or not, both players were already growing short of time.

21 P-N3	R-B2	28 P-QN4	R/2-B2
22 R-N1	P-KR4	29 PxP	RxP
23 P-KR4	PxP	30 R-N8	Q-N5
24 BxRP	B-R3	31 RxB	QxR
25 P-B3	QR-KB1	32 K-N2	Q-B4
26 K-R1	R-N2	33 PxP	R-K6
27 P-N3	B-B1	34 QxR	BxQ

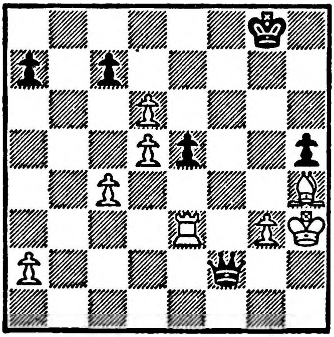


At this point both players had only seconds left. As Gheorghiu snapped off his opponent's Queen, he also scattered many of the remaining pieces in all directions. The two players hastily restored them to their proper squares—all except White's King-Knight-pawn, which Saidy shrewdly allowed to remain temporarily on the sidelines. Play over the next few moves with that pawn removed from the board.

35	RxB	Q-B8ch
36	K-R2	R-B7ch?

Gheorghiu had planned this combination long before, and now played it automatically. In his previous calculations he had naturally taken into account White's pawn on his KN3. Even so, the move is a blunder.

37	NxR	QxNch
38	K-R3	. . .



38 . . . QxR??

With 38 . . . PxP Black still wins with little difficulty. Gheorghiu had forgotten all about White's King-Knight-pawn at this point, and thought that 38 . . . QxR was check! Saidy now quietly replaced the pawn on KN3 and played

39 P-Q7! . . .

And White wins.

39	**. . .**	**Q-KB6**
40	**P-Q8/Qch**	**K-R2**
41	**Q-K7ch**	**K-N1**
42	**Q-K6ch**	**K-R2**
43	**Q-K7ch**	**Resigns**

V

Chess Scandals

In the repertory of the late American chessmaster and raconteur Al Horowitz was a humorous lecture entitled "How to Cheat at Chess."

On the face of it, it is impossible to cheat at chess. The chessmen are all out on the board where everybody can see them, and it would be a dull-witted opponent indeed against whom some sleight-of-hand could be perpetrated. Thus, any stories about "cheating" must be of the Tyll Eulenspiegel variety, in which a clever rogue pulls wool over the eyes of some slow-thinking dupe. One such story concerns George Nelson Treysman, probably the greatest coffeehouse player of all time (and strong enough outside his natural habitat to have finished third in the 1936 United States championship). Treysman earned his livelihood in the dingy cafes on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, where he would take on all comers for small stakes. One day, or so this curious piece of folklore goes, he was playing one of his regular "customers" and was, as it sometimes happens with even the most successful of hustlers, losing. There was a huge crowd of kibbitzers around the board, and the levels of smoke, noise, and general confusion were at their usual befuddling heights. At the critical moment of the game a waiter elbowed his way through the crowd bearing a tray on which rested, among other things, a salt shaker. Treysman captured the salt shaker *en passant,* slammed it down on the appropriate square, and shouted "Mate!." Before his startled opponent could protest, Treysman had pocketed the stakes and begun to set up the pieces for the next game. Legend has it that this unusual maneuver was successful: after considerable wrangling the game was held to be a win for Treysman, and all side bets were paid off.

Unfortunately, not all stories about cheating at chess are humorous. Top-level chess is a ferociously competitive business, and not everyone involved in it is honest. The dishonest men in chess have conspired over the years to demonstrate that there is more scope for skullduggery in the game than even the most cynical observer might have suspected.

When the man in the street hears of someone cheating at chess he supposes that one player has altered the position on the board in his favor when his opponent was called to the telephone. Anyone who has ever played the game seriously knows that this is impossible, however, and the initial impression that it is very difficult to cheat while a game is in progress is undoubtedly correct. Occasions when a player has been able to defraud the man sitting opposite him are very rare, and usually involve a violation of article 7 of the Laws of Chess, usually called the "touch-move" rule:

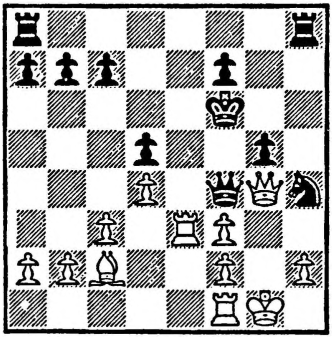
> A move is completed . . . in the case of the transfer of a piece to a vacant square, when the player's hand has quitted the piece. . . .

Most chessplayers have had the disheartening experience of playing on the board a move that "looked" fine in his head, only to realize, after his hand had quitted the piece, that it was in fact a horrendous blunder. The first impulse is to reach out and take it back, and sometimes that impulse can be resisted only with difficulty. It is a rare event indeed when anyone actually succumbs to it.

The "touch-move" rule has been very strictly enforced on occasion; in the following instance, from the tournament at Hastings in 1895, its violation cost the game:

FRENCH DEFENSE

	White	*Black*		*White*	*Black*
	Marco	Albin		Marco	Albin
1	P-K4	P-K3	13	P-B3	B-Q3
2	P-Q4	P-Q4	14	BxB	QxB
3	N-QB3	B-N5	15	N-N3	N-K2
4	PxP	PxP	16	B-B2	Q-B5
5	N-B3	N-KB3	17	Q-Q3	N-N3
6	B-Q3	O-O	18	QR-K1	P-KR4
7	O-O	B-N5	19	R-K5	N-R5
8	B-KN5	N-B3	20	R-K3	K-N2
9	N-K2	P-KR3	21	NxPch	NxN
10	B-R4	BxN	22	Q-R7ch	K-B3
11	PxB	P-KN4	23	QxN	R-KR1
12	B-N3	Q-Q2	24	Q-N4	. . .



Here, according to the tournament book, "Black inadvertently touched the Pawn at KB3, which compelled the loss of the Queen."

> This was one of the questions which came before the Committee, but they decided that, although the touching may have been unintentional, Herr Marco was quite within his rights, if not even bound, to insist on the Pawn being taken, especially as the touching of it was probably an outcome of mental workings, for its capture with the Knight was at first sight very strong.

We can infer from this account that Herr Marco was seated at the board when the violation occurred, and made a claim to the tournament director. When the opponent is off somewhere, however, and no tournament official is watching, some few players feel free on occasion to keep making a particular move until they do it right, and the laws of chess be damned. If a few spectators see them take back a move, or even if they do it in full view of a huge audience, it is admittedly embarrassing, but hardly fatal: only the opponent or a tournament official can instigate action against them, and only on the strength of what they themselves have witnessed. A former U.S. champion has long been known to have the fastest hands in the game, and the incident at the 1967 Interzonal tournament at Sousse, Tunisia, when Yugoslav grandmaster Milan Matulovich withdrew a move so blatantly that his colleagues nicknamed him "J'adoubovich," is a cherished piece of chess lore.

Another law of chess sometimes intentionally violated is Article 18.1(c), which states quite clearly:

> It is forbidden to distract or worry the opponent in any way whatsoever.

Although subarticle 2 of article 18 goes on to state that "Infractions of the laws as indicated in subarticle 1 can entail penalties reaching as far as the loss of a game," penalties are almost never exacted. There are humorous stories about claims under this rule that mostly serve to point up the amiable eccentricities of various players, such as the famous one about Aron Nimzovich (1886–1935), who abhorred tobacco smoke. Once, when his opponent took out his pipe and began to fiddle with it, although, in deference to Nimzovich, he had agreed to refrain from smoking, Nimzovich complained to the tournament director. "But, Herr Nimzovich," the director protested, "he's not actually smoking."

"I know," Nimzovich replied, "but he *threatens* to smoke, and you know as well as I that in chess the threat is often stronger than the execution." (This was one of the basic principles elaborated in Nimzovich's brilliant work *My System.*)

This story is apparantly true, but is a bright spot in rather a dark picture. Some players, knowing how difficult it is to prove that one's opponent is actually attempting to harass him, have cultivated mannerisms that, if not actually designed to distract or worry, can certainly have that effect in the heat of battle. Even if the twitchings, shakings, kickings, fidgetings, and other facial and bodily mannerisms to which some players are given are quite unconscious (chess is, after all, a nerve-wracking game), some greater effort ought to be exerted to control them.

More deliberate harassment is rare, but when incidents do occur they can be ugly. Grandmaster Vlastimil Hort of Czechoslovakia has recently written an article for a German newspaper in which he accuses some of his colleagues of tactics intended to distract their opponents. Thus far, however, tournament officials remain unconvinced that such actions are deliberate—at least there have been no forfeits.

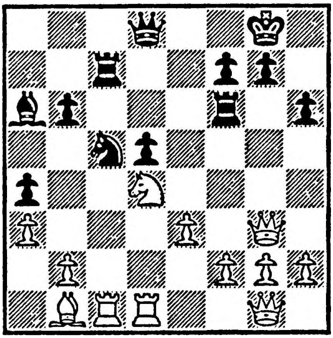
Another way in which it is possible to annoy an opponent with impunity is to offer him a draw after every move. While it is true that the American master Arthur Dake was once forfeited against then world champion Capablanca for repeatedly offering a draw, this is the only recorded instance, and it may well be doubted if the forfeit would have been imposed had the positions been reversed.* Here again, the questions, both moral and technical, are thorny ones: How many times may one legitimately offer a draw in a given game? How can one tell if the offer is sincere, or intended to annoy or distract the opponent? Chess is a hard game, for players and officials alike.

* Knowing Dake to be a fine sportsman we doubt that the infringement of the rule was purposeful. Like many a player, he was reacting to the severe pressure of competition.

The international tournament held at Nottingham, England, in the summer of 1936 was not only one of the strongest ever, but was probably the one in which the personalities of the participants (as distinct from their technical abilities) played the greatest part in determining the outcome. Dr. Max Euwe of Holland had won the world championship the previous year in a match against Dr. Alexander Alekhine. As his victory was most unexpected, and as Alekhine was widely known to have a serious drinking problem, many people felt that Euwe had been either lucky or had taken advantage of an opponent who was over the hill. Euwe came to Nottingham anxious to prove himself worthy of his newly won title.

Alekhine, however, was far from a spent force—he recovered the championship from Euwe in a match held the following year—and he came to Nottingham determined to show that Euwe's victory had been a fluke. José Capablanca, whom Alekhine had dethroned in 1927, and who had been trying in vain ever since to secure another crack at the title, had a large following in the chess community that believed him to be the rightful champion. A win at Nottingham would have rendered that judgment all but universal. In addition, there were a number of young players—future world champion Mikhail Botvinnik, Americans Reuben Fine and Samuel Reshevsky, and the young Czechoslovakian Salo Flohr—all burning to show what they could do not only against the world championship contenders, but against the older players generally and against one another. The four Englishmen in the tournament, although destined to finish at the bottom of the score table, must have felt fiercely competitive among themselves in their anxiety not to finish dead last. Perhaps the only man at Nottingham able to draw a relaxed breath was former world champion Dr. Emanuel Lasker, then 68 years old and hardly expected to contend for first prize.

In such an atmosphere nerves must have rubbed raw very early, and an incident from the third round is indicative of what things must have been like. Capablanca was playing Flohr, and after 37 moves the following position was reached:



Capablanca (Black), to move, played 37 . . . Q-B1??, "a terrible oversight in a position which was by no means desperate and which has improved in the last twelve to fifteen moves," according to Alekhine's note in the tournament book. He says:

> The explanation of his blunder has been given by Capablanca himself in the Soviet magazine "64" (20th August 1936). He writes: "Both players were very short of time. When four moves remained to be made our table was surrounded by a crowd of journalists, participants and others. It is impossible to play under such circumstances.*
>
> Max Euwe, who stood close to the table, spoke several times to Flohr, telling him the number of moves remaining to be made, as both players had stopped writing down the moves. As I requested him to keep quiet he started to argue with me, and tried to persuade me that he was entitled to speak.
>
> This interference on the part of Euwe was absolutely inadmissable; but the tournament director was at that time busy with his own correspondence, and as a result of this interference I made a grave error, losing the exchange.

It is important to realize that this is only Capablanca's side of the story. Dr. Euwe has long been regarded as one of the finest gentlemen in the chess world, and the incident, from his point of view, must have appeared vastly different. Gravest strictures must be reserved for the tournament director, who might have found a more opportune time to be "busy with his own correspondence."

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* But even today many major tournaments are played under similar conditions.

The most obvious way to cheat at chess is to collude with your opponent to fix the game, to his advantage, to yours, or to that of a third party, and to the detriment of other players. Such collusion can take various forms. The simplest is when a competitor in a tournament takes things easy against his friends and plays hard against strangers and mere acquaintances. This "buddy system" can arise from an unspoken agreement, or from an explicit understanding, but the effect is the same either way: when the two close friends meet the game is a draw, often without much pretense at struggle. Various perennial competitors in the Russian and Yugoslav national championships have been known for years to enjoy such comfortable arrangements with one another.

This form of cheating may seem relatively innocuous, but it has several bad features: first, it deprives the spectators, who have paid admission to watch a battle to the finish between chess giants, of what they have come to see; second, it can put an undue strain on those players who have no "buddies" in this sense, and need to play a tough game every round; and third, such friendly draws are not real chess, and lower the standard of the game both intellectually and from a sporting point of view.

On the other hand, many close friends and even relatives wage fierce struggles whenever they meet over the chessboard. Perhaps the best example is that of the American stars Robert and Donald Byrne—some of the most exciting games in U.S. championship competition have been played between these two friendly, but intense, rivals.

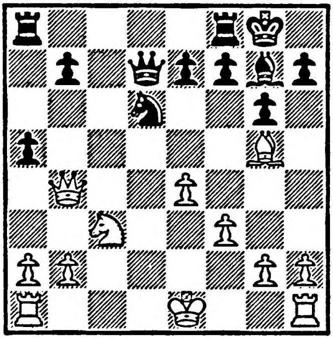
When brought over into the international arena the "buddy system" can have more ominous, even political, overtones. When Bobby Fischer returned from the candidates' tournament at Curaçao in 1962 after a disappointing fourth-place finish, almost his first act was to publish an article in *Sports Illustrated* magazine entitled "The Russians Have Fixed World Chess." In it, he accused some of the Russian players at Curacao of making short draws among themselves and playing all-out against him, to his detriment. The evidence he presented was, unfortunately, ambiguous—this is the problem when one comes to judge most cases of alleged cheating at chess. It was both difficult to prove that the Russian arrangement, had there been one, did in fact hurt his chances, and even more difficult to show that any given game was the product of collusion, tacit or overt. If Fischer had been winning most of his games, how could it have helped his principal Russian rivals to draw many of theirs? As for the games themselves—as Hans Kmoch has written:

> After all, there is no rule compelling players to avoid errors in judgment and to make the best moves. Nor is it possible to prove that a player has failed purposely.

Fischer's best argument was provided by the following gamelet, between Russians Paul Keres and Tigran Petrosian:

SICILIAN DEFENSE

	White	*Black*
	Keres	Petrosian
1	P-K4	P-QB4
2	N-KB3	N-QB3
3	P-Q4	PxP
4	NxP	P-KN3
5	P-QB4	N-B3
6	N-QB3	NxN
7	QxN	P-Q3
8	P-B5	B-N2
9	B-N5ch	B-Q2
10	BxBch	QxB
11	PxP	O-O
12	B-N5	N-K1
13	Q-N4	NxP
14	P-B3	P-QR4



Drawn!!

In the final position Black has an overwhelming advantage. One plausible line (not too difficult to find over the board) is 15 Q-N3 (where else?), P-R5; 16 Q-R3 (to prevent 16 . . . P-R6!), P-R3!; 17 B-B4, N-N4; 18 Q-N4 (or 18 NxN, QxN; 19 QxKP, P-R6!), NxN; 19 PxN, KR-B1, and Black is winning.

Instead, Petrosian offered a draw! "There can be little doubt that the agreement had been reached earlier," writes Kmoch. But how much earlier—on the tenth move?—before the start of the game?—before the start of the tournament? Only Keres and Petrosian know, and, like most Soviets, they are experts at shrugging their shoulders in reply to embarrassing questions.

The following game has provoked more suspicion of foul play than any other in the history of chess. It is from the final round of the 1970 Interzonal tournament at Palma de Mallorca. Bobby Fischer, the tournament winner, Robert Huebner of West Germany, Yefim Geller of the Soviet Union, and Bent Larsen of Denmark had already qualified for the candidates' matches, along with Viktor Korchnoi and Tigran Petrosian, who had been seeded. There were no fewer than eight players in contention for the last two qualifying places: Wolfgang Uhlmann of East Germany and Mark Taimanov of the Soviet Union had 13 points out of 22 going into the final round, Svetozar Gligorich (Yugoslavia), Oscar Panno (Argentina), Lev Polugayevski (U.S.S.R.), Lajos Portisch (Hungary) and Vassily Smyslov (U.S.S.R.) had 12½, and Enrique Mecking of Brazil had 12. If either Uhlmann or Taimanov lost, they would almost certainly have been nosed out; if either drew, he would almost certainly have faced a playoff for the last qualifying place.

In the event, both Uhlmann and Taimanov won, Uhlmann in a good game against Renato Naranja of the Philippines, and Taimanov against Matulovich, in a game that provoked heated discussion for months afterward. The best introduction to it is perhaps the dry account offered in the tournament book (edited by Englishmen L. S. Blackstock and R. G. Wade):

> Taimanov has an easy passage to the Candidates, as Matulovic arrives 15 minutes late and then plays 40 moves at colossal speed, though he is usually a slow mover, by which time he has a lost rook and pawn ending.

According to eyewitnesses, Matulovich spent most of the game wandering around the tournament hall, chatting with various people; according to one observer, he was "trying to convey the impression that he wasn't involved in a real game" —in other words, that the outcome had been decided beforehand. This is admittedly not evidence of anything—merely the subjective impression of one bystander. The game itself, as usual, reveals nothing; the worst one can say of it is that it is rather a dreary effort on Matulovich's part. (The comments quoted are from the tournament book.)

"This game is curious because of Matulovic's attitude. By drawing he could improve his prize; more so by winning."

QUEEN'S GAMBIT

White	*Black*
Taimanov	Matulovich

1 P-Q4 . . .

"Matulovic strolled in at least fifteen minutes late, sat down, filed his finger-nails, looked at the newly issued bulletin that had been lying at his board side."

1 . . .	P-Q4
2 P-QB4	PxP
3 N-KB3	N-KB3
4 P-K3	. . .

"Matulovic picked up the bulletin again—his clock was ticking—and browsed through it for five minutes looking quite happy, before resuming play which he now conducted at a sensationally fast pace for such an important game which could determine a qualifier."

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Taimanov	Matulovich	Taimanov	Matulovich
4 . . .	B-N5	15 BxB	QxB
5 BxP	P-K3	16 Q-K3	O-O
6 N-B3	QN-Q2	17 P-B4	Q-K2
7 P-KR3	B-R4	18 P-K5	P-B3
8 O-O	B-Q3	19 KR-K1	KR-K1
9 P-K4	P-K4	20 Q-B3	Q-B4ch
10 PxP	QNxP	21 Q-B2	QxQch
11 B-K2	BxN	22 KxQ	N-Q4
12 BxB	NxBch	23 NxN	PxN
13 QxN	Q-K2	24 KR-Q1	KR-Q1
14 B-B4	B-K4	25 QR-B1	R-Q2

"Between moves Matulovic strolled looking completely unconcerned—at variance with his normal tense, shortish paces."

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Taimanov	Matulovich	Taimanov	Matulovich
26 K-K3	QR-Q1	29 R-Q3	R-K1
27 K-Q4	K-B1	30 R/3-QB3	P-QN3
28 P-B5	K-K2	31 R-B7	R/1-Q1

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Taimanov	Matulovich	Taimanov	Matulovich
32 R/1-B6	K-K1	38 RxRch	KxR
33 P-KN4	P-KR3	39 KxP	P-R4
34 P-KR4	R-N1	40 R-Q6ch	K-K1
35 P-N5	PxP	41 K-B6	R-K2
36 PxP	R-N2	42 R-Q5	Resigns
37 R-B8ch	R-Q1		

A strangulation game reminiscent of a simultaneous exhibition. To create this work of art Taimanov took one hour and eight minutes—four minutes more than Matulovich.

This victory entitled Taimanov to proceed to a candidates' match in Vancouver the following year, where he was crushed 6–0 by Bobby Fischer. Perhaps the weed of crime really does bear bitter fruit—if anybody knows, it must be Taimanov.

Sometimes the deals that aren't made are more interesting than those that are. A Soviet grandmaster tells the following story about two of his older colleagues.

As the 1945 U.S.S.R. championship progressed Aleksandr Kotov, who was playing very well, found himself in heated contention for first prize. In the next round, however, he was slated to play the Black pieces against Aleksandr Tolush. Tolush was having a bad tournament, and was obviously going to finish well out of the prize money, but he was a dangerous attacking player and Kotov thought it might be a good idea to insure a favorable result beforehand. So he approached Tolush and dropped a few hints, to which he received the cryptic reply, "Glory for you, money for me."

Kotov looked puzzled, so Tolush blandly explained: he wanted *all* of Kotov's prize money.

"You're out of your mind," responded Kotov, indignantly. "I'll give you a hundred rubles."

"Glory for you," Tolush repeated, "money for me."

"Be reasonable," Kotov implored. "Two hundred rubles."

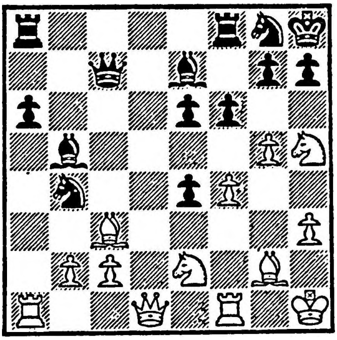
"Glory for you, money for me."

"*Nyet,*" said Kotov. "I'll take my chances in the game."

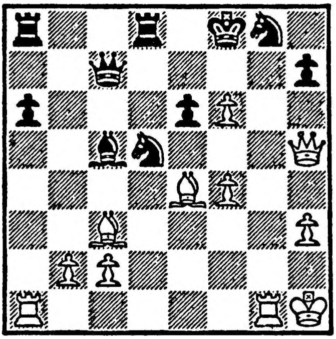
"Very well," said Tolush. "I shall mate you in the vacinity of the squares f7 and g7."

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Tolush	Kotov	Tolush	Kotov
1 P-K4	P-QB4	12 K-R1	O-O
2 N-KB3	P-K3	13 P-KN4	K-R1
3 P-Q4	PxP	14 N-N3	P-N5
4 NxP	N-KB3	15 PxP	QNxP
5 N-QB3	P-Q3	16 P-N5	N-N1
6 P-KN3	N-B3	17 P-B4	B-QB3
7 B-N2	B-Q2	18 QN-K2	B-N4
8 KN-K2	P-QR3	19 B-Q2!	P-Q4
9 O-O	P-QN4	20 B-QB3	PxP?
10 P-QR3	Q-B2	21 N-R5	P-B3
11 P-R3	B-K2		



22 NxNP!!	BxN	25 Q-R5	KR-Q1
23 QxB	KxN	26 R-KN1	B-B4
24 BxP	N-Q4	27 PxPch	K-B1



White	*Black*
Tolush	Kotov
28 RxNch!!	KxR
29 BxPch!	K-B1
30 Q-N6	NxP/3
31 QxNch	Q-B2
32 Q-R6ch	K-K2
33 Q-N5ch	K-Q2
34 QxB	QxB

White	*Black*
Tolush	Kotov
35 R-Q1ch	K-K1
36 Q-B6ch	K-B1
37 B-N4ch	K-B2
38 Q-B7ch	K-N3
39 P-B5ch!	K-R3
40 Q-B4ch	K-N2
41 Q-N5ch	Resigns

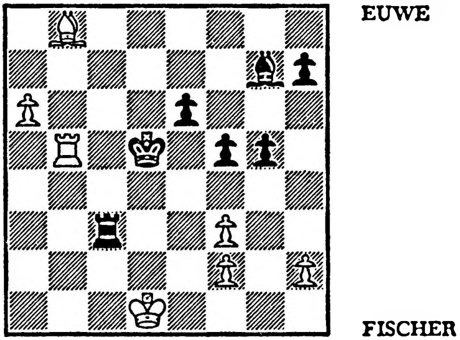
VI

Blunders

All experienced chess players regard blunders as inevitable—a part of the game, like the clock or the score sheets. No one plays perfectly, and there is a good deal of sad truth in Saviely Tartakower's well-known aphorism that the winner of a chess game is the player who makes the next-to-last mistake.

Nevertheless, it is much easier to be philosophical about one's opponent's blunders. Many players regard their own either as examples of incredible, if momentary, stupidity, or as personal affronts from the gods, who, as Homer tells us, have the power to cloud men's minds when it suits their purposes. A chess player who has blundered can seldom offer an explanation—a real explanation, as distinct from an excuse—of why he made the move he did; indeed, he may be more anxious for an explanation than anybody else. There is probably no veteran of the tournament wars who has not lost sleep wondering why he chose a crucial last-round game in which to overlook PxQ.

To explain a blunder—to identify and describe the mental processes from which it sprang—in chess, as in any activity that requires precise calculation, is far from easy. Many regard chess blunders as largely random phenomena, and there is an important sense in which they are. Everyone, no matter how strong, may be expected to overlook *something* during the course of a game, and whether that something happens to be of vital importance to the outcome, or completely irrelevant, is apparantly fortuitous. Take the following position, for instance:



In the game between future world champion Bobby Fischer and former world champion Dr. Max Euwe of Holland, played in the 1960 Olympiad at Leipzig, Fischer had the advantage all the way; in the diagramed position, Euwe chose the move 32 . . . K-B5 and lost routinely: 33 R-N7, B-Q5; 34 R-B7ch, K-Q6; 35 RxRch, KxR; 36 B-K5, Resigns. In his book *My 60 Memorable Games* Fischer recounts an incident from the post mortem:

> After the game Euwe showed me a cute trap he might have played for—and almost frainted when I fell into it! The line arises after 32 . . . K-B3; 33 R-R5, B-Q5 and he asked, "What do you do now?" I looked a few seconds and played *34* B-K5? whereupon he uncorked R-B4! which leads to a draw. Upon reconsideration, however, simply *34* K-K2 wins. It's these tidbits that you remember best.

The move 34 B-K5? is obviously a blunder, which would have cost Fischer half a point had he committed it over the board. Blunders in the post mortem don't count, of course, nor, if Fischer had planned during the game to answer 32 . . . K-B3 with 33 R-R5, B-Q5; 34 B-K5? would it have mattered a jot once Euwe in fact played 32 . . . K-B5. (It is safe to presume that had play indeed gone 32 . . . K-B3; 33 R-R5, B-Q5 Fischer would have thought longer than "a few seconds" before making his next move—especially since he is almost never short of time.)

Obviously mistakes in calculation that are confined to the notes, like brilliant combinations that the opponent might have allowed but didn't, are irrelevant to the outcome of the game, if not to the understanding of it. When we use the term "blunder," however, we are usually talking about a move that was actually played, and that did prove costly. The first few months of any chess player's career are spent principally in trying to avoid those monstrous oversights that cause him to allow mate in one or to leave his Queen *en prise*. As the consequences of these mishaps are usually both drastic and acutely embarrassing—when he permits them to happen he loses the game immediately and his opponent and the spectators enjoy a good laugh at his expense—he either learns to avoid them or takes up some easier game.

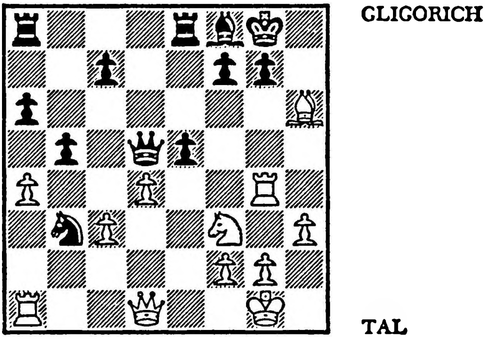
Although no chess player can ever hope entirely to eliminate this crass type of blunder from his play (even world champions sometimes commit them, although very rarely, of course, and under extraordinary circumstances), he soon moves on to be plagued by more subtle blunders. Some of his progress can be explained in terms of the old behaviorist catchphrase "trial and error," but the whole process must remain to some extent a mystery until the phenomena of blunders in general are more satisfactorily explained.

It is only recently that anyone has attempted to classify chess blunders, and to investigate why players commit them. Soviet grandmaster Nikolai Krogius, who was a member of Boris Spassky's entourage when he defended his world title in Reykjavik, is also a psychologist, and has written a monograph that in part deals with the subject. In it he identifies various types of blunders and attempts to trace the thought processes by which players were led to perpetrate them. His terminology is sometimes a little strange, but examples help to make his meaning clear. As his work is as yet little known in the United States, we present a summary here.

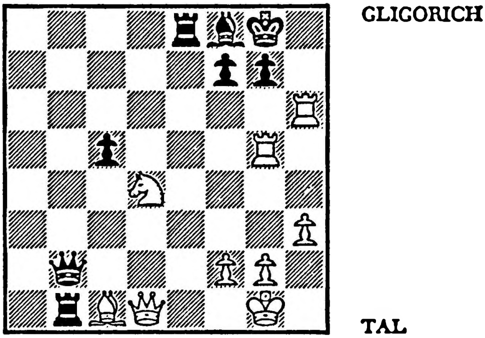
One common cause of blunders Krogius calls "the retained image." In the course of a player's calculations a piece can sometimes become "fixed" to a certain square, and even if, in the course of his analysis, he realizes that it will in fact move away, he still envisions it as rooted in its original position. A striking example occurred in a game between Svetozar Gligorich and Mikhail Tal during their 1968 candidates' match in Belgrade. The game itself is an excellent one, featuring a brilliant defense by Gligorich, and is worth presenting in full:

RUY LOPEZ

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Tal	Gligorich	Tal	Gligorich
1 P-K4	P-K4	12 N-B1	B-N2
2 N-KB3	N-QB3	13 N-N3	N-QR4
3 B-N5	P-QR3	14 B-B2	N-B5
4 B-R4	N-B3	15 P-QR4	P-Q4
5 O-O	B-K2	16 P-N3	QPxP
6 R-K1	P-QN4	17 QNxP	NxN
7 B-N3	P-Q3	18 BxN	BxB
8 P-B3	O-O	19 RxB	Q-Q4
9 P-KR3	P-R3	20 R-N4	N-R4
10 P-Q4	R-K1	21 BxP	NxP
11 QN-Q2	B-B1		



22	R-R3	NPxP
23	RxP	QR-N1
24	RxP	PxP
25	PxP	P-QB4
26	B-K3	R-N5
27	R-N5	Q-N2
28	R-R6	NxP
29	NxN	R-N8
30	B-B1	Q-N7



31 Q-R5? . . .

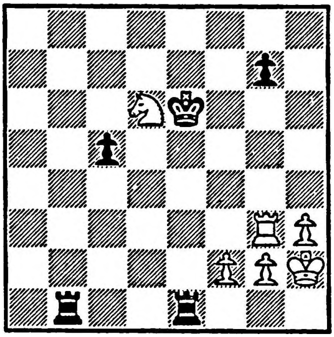
Arduous analysis has shown that 31 N-N3 would have won for White. Tal rejected the move because of the possible reply 31 . . . Q-K7, but Soviet annotators Abramov and Koblentz have shown that after 32 Q-Q5, P-B5; 33 Q-KB5 (33 R-R8ch, KxR; 34 QxKBP, PxN; 35 R-R5ch, QxR; 36 QxQch, K-N1; 37 Q-Q5ch leads to a draw), Q-Q6; 34 R-R8ch, KxR; 35 QxP or 33 . . . R-K3; 34 R-R4, Q-K8ch; 35 K-R2, B-Q3ch; 36 B-B4, Q-N8ch; 37 K-N3, R-K6ch; 38 K-N4! White comes out on top. The text move initiates a combination based on a "retained image"—Tal later admitted that the Black Rook on K1 somehow seemed "fixed" on that square even after he had taken account in some sense of Black's powerful 35th move.

31 . . .	QxBch
32 K-R2	B-Q3ch
33 RxB	Q-B5ch
34 R-N3	QxR
35 N-B5	R/1-K8!

Tal had overlooked neither this move itself, nor its consequences. He simply supposed that, even though the Rook had moved, it was still somehow on its original square!

36 QxPch	KxQ
37 NxQch	K-K3

GLIGORICH



TAL

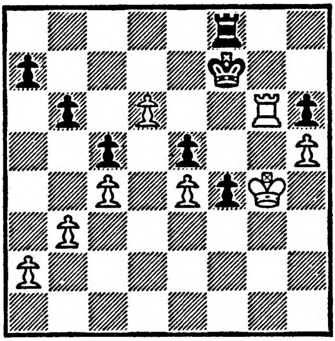
Here Tal had calculated that he could play 38 NxR! (the one on *White's* K8 that isn't there anymore), and so regain the exchange and emerge with a winning Rook-and-pawn ending. In reality, he remained the exchange down and lost quickly:

38 R-N6ch	K-Q4
39 N-B5	R-N2
40 N-K3ch	RxN!
41 PxR	R-QB2
42 K-N3	P-B5
43 K-B4	P-B6
44 P-K4ch	K-B5
45 R-QR6	P-B7
46 R-R1	K-Q6
Resigns	

Another category of blunder arises in consequence of a phenomenon Krogius calls "the inert image." He gives two examples, apparently related because in both the player who commits the blunder is led astray by an *idée fixe:* he has made up his mind that the game has taken a certain course, and is therefore unprepared to modify his thinking when the situation on the board suddenly changes, for better or worse. The most common kind of *idée fixe* concerns the outcome of the game—a player becomes convinced that he is going to win, or lose, and that nothing he or his opponent does henceforward can have any bearing on the matter. When a man is convinced that he is hopelessly lost his play deteriorates, and he is frequently unable to take advantage of a chance for salvation with which his opponent may unexpectedly present him.

Less frequent, but more painful when they occur, are those situations in which a player is absolutely convinced he is winning, and so no longer feels obliged to pay very close attention to what is going on. An annotator will occasionally write of a position in which one side or the other has an easy win that "the game now plays itself," but in real life no game ever plays itself, and constant vigilance is required in the easiest positions, right up until the opponent resigns.

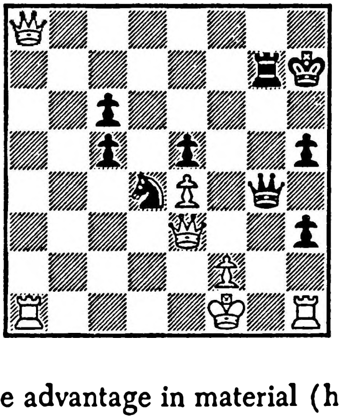
Even more insidious are positions in which a player, for one reason or another, believes he has an easy win, but is actually walking on the edge of a precipice. Krogius cites Tigran Petrosian's debacle against Viktor Korchnoi in a game played in Moscow in 1963:



Petrosian (White) had had much the better of the game since early in the opening, and had quickly reduced Korchnoi to complete passivity. In the position in the diagram, however, things are far from easy; although Black still has no counterplay, it is difficult for White to make further progress, and, in addition, there are a number of traps into which he can fall. One amusing way for White to commit suicide is by 37 K-B5??, P-B6; 38 R-N1 (or 38 KxP, P-B7; 39 R-B6ch, K-N2, and Black wins), R-KN1!; 40 R-KB1 (40 RxR, P-B7), R-N4 mate. Petrosian, because he had been "winning" throughout, was under the impression that he must still be winning, and played the equally catastrophic 37 RxP??; after 37 . . . P-B6 he awakened to the fact that he was now lost (after 38 KxP, 38 . . . K-N2ch wins White's Rook). "I am personally convinced," remarked Petrosian after the game, "that if a strong master fails to notice such a threat [as that of . . . P-B6] immediately, he can deliberate over the position for 20 to 30 minutes thereafter and still not see it."

This kind of blunder is generally attributed, in a not very illuminating way, to "overconfidence." Krogius has done service in showing its family relationship to blunders caused by an *idée fixe* of a different kind. All beginners at chess are told that they must not make random moves but rather form a logical plan and carry it through consistently, and, indeed, the consequences of planless play are usually dismal enough. However, there is such a thing as being too consistent: a player will sometimes be so intent on carrying out his plan that he will ignore those features of the position apparently irrelevant to it.

Most examples of this kind of "inert image" occur when a player is himself attacking wildly, and fails to notice the necessity for a defensive move. Krogius's most interesting example, however, is of the opposite kind, where a player is being attacked and becomes so preoccupied with the necessity to defend himself that he overlooks the opportunity for a counterattack by which he can turn the tables. This position is from the game Gavilikovski-Simagin, Shavno-Zdroi, Poland, 1950:



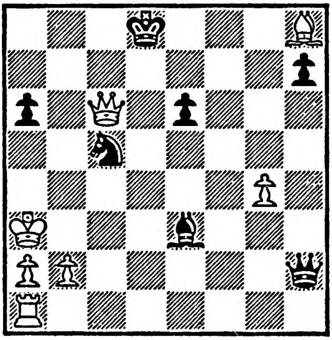
SIMAGIN

GAVILIKOVSKI

White has a huge advantage in material (he has just made a new Queen with check by 37 P-R8, to which Black has replied 37 . . . K-R2) but is threatened by a powerful assault against his King. Obsessed with the need for defense Gavilikovski played 38 Q-QR6, and after 38 . . . Q-N7ch; 39 K-K1, N-B7ch; 40 K-Q2, NxQ the game ended in a draw. But by sacrificing his newly made Queen with 38 Q-R8ch!, White could have seized the initiative and won quickly (38 . . . KxQ; 39 Q-R6ch, etc.). When Gavilikovski played 37 P-R8/

Qch, he did so expressly in order to follow it up with the defensive move 38 Q-QR6, and so never even thought of any counterattacking possibilities.

There is another kind of blunder that arises out of sheer inflexibility, in which a player forms a plan and pursues it, unmindful of altered circumstances that render his original objective irrelevant. It occurs in positions in which the perpetrator is winning routinely through some elaborate maneuver and fails to take advantage of a chance to win much more quickly. Such blunders are seldom criticized too severely as long as the player wins anyway—a win is a win, and who cares if it takes a few moves longer to accomplish? A good example, both of this kind of blunder and of the prevalent attitude toward it, is provided by the game Gligorich-Böok, from the Interzonal tournament at Saltsjobaden, Sweden, in 1948.

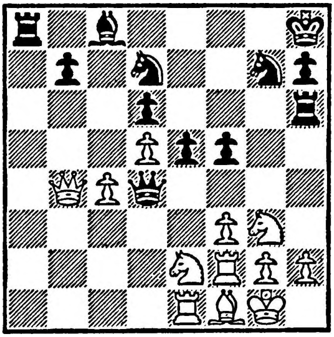


In this position Gligorich played 33 R-Q1ch??, and went on to win after another eighteen moves. If this blunder by a player of Gligorich's caliber is surprising, the following note, appended to it by an annotator who shall be nameless, is incredible:

> The text is not really a bad move; it is simply not the best. Gligorich missed 33 B-B6 mate not because he was in time trouble but because he was taking a long term view of the situation and saw his way to a clear win.

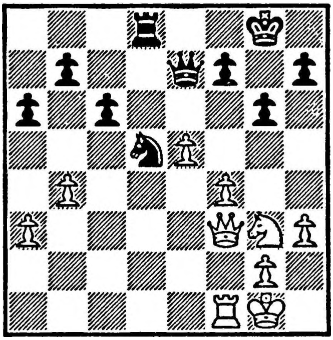
If this was written with a straight face, we commend to the author's attention article 11, section 1 of the Laws of Chess, which reads: "The game is won for the player who has mated the opponent's king." Any move that is played in preference to mate in one is "really" a bad one; in this instance, it happened not to be costly (just unesthetic). The point is that even the best players will sometimes become so engrossed in their complicated schemes (or, in Krogius's terms, beguiled by an "inert image") that their accustomed alertness will desert them.

Yet another catagory of blunder, caused by what Krogius calls "the advanced image," is perhaps the most complicated and difficult to explain satisfactorily. A victim of an advanced image is so intent on what is *going* to happen at some future time of the game that he fails to appreciate the significance of what *is* happening, often right under his nose. There is a joke at least as old as Plato about a philosopher who was walking through a field rapt in contemplation of the starry heavens and fell into a ditch; his chessic equivalent is the player so intent on plotting profound combinations that he leaves his Queen *en prise*. Just such a misfortune befell Soviet master Nikolai Ryumin in the following position:



At this point in his game against Capablanca in the international tournament played at Moscow in 1936 Ryumin (Black), deep in thought, discovered a combination, or rather a combinational motif, based on a Knight fork: . . . N-B4, . . . QxRch and . . . N-Q6ch, recovering the Queen with a winning advantage. Delighted with his discovery, Ryumin played 26 . . . N-B4 without troubling to notice that Capablanca's last move (26 N-K2) had attacked his Queen. Capa of course played 27 NxQ and Ryumin immediately resigned.

Most examples of blunders caused by "advanced" images are more subtle than this. One form occurs when a player overestimates his opponent's threat, or supposes a danger to be immediate when in fact it is still some way off. In the following position, from the game Boleslavsky-Flohr (Stockholm, 1948), Flohr was misled by an advanced image of this type into making an ill-timed defensive move:



FLOHR

BOLESLAVSKY

Cautious by nature, Flohr was anxious to foil his opponent's plan for a Kingside attack beginning with the advance P-B5. Certainly the threat of P-B5 is in a sense inherent in the position in that White, if he hopes to get anywhere on the Kingside, must strive to play the move sooner or later. Nevertheless, at the present moment P-B5 is no threat at all; the variation 28 . . . R-K1 (say); 29 P-B5?, QxP; 30 PxP, BPxP; 31 Q-B7ch, K-R1 is in Black's favor. Flohr, however, thought it necessary to prevent P-B5 once and for all, and, in striving to do so, completely spoiled his position. The game continued:

28 . . .	P-KB4?
29 PxPe.p.	NxBP/3
30 P-B5!	. . .

Now this move is very powerful. When George Bernard Shaw returned to England from a tour of the United States he was asked by a reporter at dockside if, during his stay in New York, he had visited the Statue of Liberty. "No," Shaw replied, "not even I, the world's greatest exponent of irony in the theater, have that much taste for irony."

30 . . .	P-KN4
31 N-R5	NxN
32 QxN	. . .

and White won.

The allotment of material to the various chapters of this book is, necessarily, somewhat arbitrary; a given game may be illustrative of several points at once. There is no reason why the Rubinstein-Nimzovich game, included in the chapter on the last round where it serves to show what can happen even to the best players subjected to the pressures of a crucial competitive situation, could not have been included here: certainly no game ever played better illustrates what is meant by the term "double blunder." As astonishing as that game is, however, it is not without parallel in the history of chess, as the following example will demonstrate.

The assembly of the world's best chess players at Zürich in 1953 was the second of the so-called Candidates' Tournaments, played to determine a challenger to the world champion. At the end of the sixteenth round Samuel Reshevsky, the sole representative of the United States, was in second place, struggling against a host of Russians for the right to a match with titleholder Mikhail Botvinnik. Though the last round and its tensions were some time away (it was a twenty-eight-round event), there was still little margin for error: every game was crucial. Reshevsky's opponent in the seventeenth round was the Hungarian Laszlo Szabo, a feared attacking player but one of the tail-enders in that tournament. Reshevsky had defeated him earlier in the double round-robin event and, although he had the Black pieces this time, probably sat down with high hopes of another full point. If so, these hopes could hardly have survived the opening.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

	White	*Black*
	Szabo	Reshevsky
1	P-Q4	N-KB3
2	P-QB4	P-K3
3	N-KB3	P-Q4
4	N-B3	P-B4
5	PxQP	NxP
6	P-K3	N-QB3
7	B-Q3	NxN

This exchange is unnecessary just now, and inferior to the far more usual 7 . . . B-K2. Reshevsky soon finds himself in a mess.

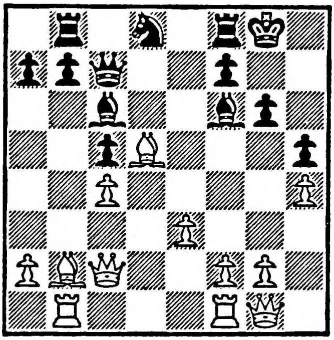
8	PxN	B-K2
9	Q-B2	P-KN3

Black is compelled to compromise his Kingside, but the weakness created by 9 . . . P-KR3 would have been far more difficult for White to exploit. Now with his next move he forces another concession that ought, in the event, to have proven decisive.

10	P-KR4!	P-KR4
11	R-QN1	R-QN1
12	B-K4	Q-B2
13	O-O	B-Q2
14	P-Q5!	PxP
15	BxQP	B-B3

And not 15 . . . O-O? because of 16 QxPch—a motif that will recur.

16 N-N5	N-Q1
17 P-QB4	B-B3
18 N-K4	B-N2
19 B-N2	O-O
20 N-B6ch	BxN??



Black had to play 20 . . . K-R1, after which he is only lost. Now he is mated.

21 BxB??	. . .

When after the game Szabo was shown that he had missed 21 QxPch and mate next, he almost fainted (among players of his caliber, the "almost" denotes remarkable self-control). The rest of the game is, ironically, rather well played: Black wins a pawn, then sacrifices the exchange, and so secures adequate counterchances.

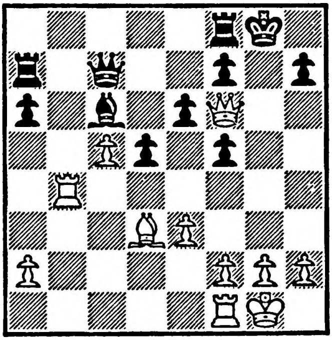
21 . . .	BxB
22 PxB	Q-Q3
23 Q-B3	QxP
24 KR-Q1	Q-B4
25 P-K4!	Q-K3

And not 25 . . . QxKP; 26 B-R8, N-K3; 27 R-K1, threatening 28 RxN and 29 Q-N7 mate.

26 B-N7	P-N3!
27 BxR	KxB
Drawn	

The position is now about even. Szabo's explanation of his part in this curious affair is pathetic: it was inconceivable that a player of Reshevsky's class could overlook a mate in two, so why should his opponent think to look for one? Later he charged Reshevsky with trying to demoralize him, an accusation that, even in such dour circumstances, must have brought a smile to Sammy's lips (if the extra half point in his score had not already done so).

A more recent example of the reciprocal blunder occurred in the game between Vlastimil Hort of Czechoslovakia and Lajos Portisch of Hungary, two of the world's strongest and most active grandmasters, played at Madrid in 1973. In the following position



Hort (White) played 29 KR-N1??, overlooking the forced mate that he saw on the following move. Portisch could now have saved himself (temporarily, at any rate) with 29 . . .

Q-K2. Instead, he saved his Queen-Rook-Pawn with 29 . . . B-N4??, and the game concluded

30 R-N4ch!	PxR
31 Q-N5ch	K-R1
32 Q-R6	Resigns

Although all blunders are in a sense inexplicable, an oversight in a lost position is usually easy to comprehend. The perpetrator is understandably discouraged by the course of events and, instead of concentrating on the position before him, is often thinking of something else: what he ought to have done at the crucial moment of the game, or even what excuse he will make to explain away his impending defeat. Some blunders in bad positions may even be intentional: a player with a not quite resignable game may leave a piece *en prise* in order to justify immediate surrender: he "shortens the agony," as the annotators often put it.

Still, players in international tournaments aren't expected to overlook mate in one, whatever the circumstances. In the following game, however, from the 1973–74 Hastings Christmas Congress, international master K. Pytel of Poland did just that. Pytel was the exchange down at the time, and his best hopes for salvation were the traditional ones: an earthquake, or the demise of his opponent, Pal Benko of the United States, from natural causes. As England is not exactly on the earthquake belt, and Benko is known to be thriving, Pytel wisely induced his adversary to an act of euthanasia.

Although our principal interest just now is with the final position, we present the game in full, for two reasons. First, it is an excellent effort on Benko's part, and second, it features an unusual opening variation in which, for a few moves, each of the players has two Queens.

SLAV DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Benko	Pytel
1 N-KB3	P-Q4
2 P-B4	P-QB3
3 P-K3	N-B3
4 N-B3	P-K3
5 P-Q4	QN-Q2
6 B-Q3	PxP
7 BxBP	P-QN4
8 B-K2	. . .

Far more usual is 8 B-Q3, leading to the main line of the Meran Defense.

8 . . .	P-QR3

Here 8 . . . B-N2, and 9 . . . P-B4 are better alternatives.

9 P-K4	P-N5
10 P-K5	PxN
11 PxN	PxNP
12 PxP	PxR(Q)
13 PxR(Q)	. . .

Games with four Queens on the board are not so rare as one might think, but most of the time, as here, at least one pair are swapped off very quickly.

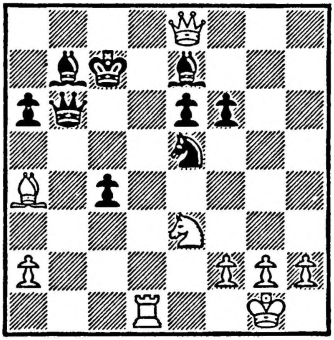
13 . .	Q-R4ch
14 B-Q2	QxQch
15 BxQ	Q-KB4
16 O-O	B-N2
17 P-Q5!	QxP

Forced. On 17 . . . KPxP White has 18 R-K1ch, and on 17 . . . BPxP; 18 B-R4, O-O-O; 19 B-R5, followed by R-B1ch leads to a winning attack.

18 QxP	P-QB4
19 B-R4	O-O-O
20 B-R5	. . .

Not 20 QxP??, N-K4!

20 . . .	N-K4
21 N-K1!	P-B5
22 BxR	QxB
23 Q-R8	P-B3
24 Q-N8	Q-Q3
25 N-B2	K-B2
26 N-K3	B-K2
27 R-Q1	Q-N3
28 Q-K8	. . .



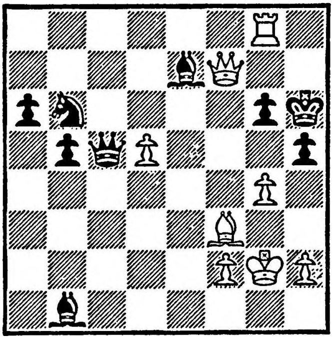
PYTEL

BENKO

Black is, of course, dead lost; after his best move, 28 . . . Q-N5, White could play simply 29 P-R4, with good prospects to secure yet another Queen before too long. Instead, he elected to grab an early dinner:

28 . . .	B-B4??
29 Q-Q8 mate	

We close this melancholy chapter with a recent example, from the 1973 Interzonal tournament at Petropolis, Brazil. It is Reshevsky (White) and Soviet grandmaster Vladimir Savon:



SAVON

RESHEVSKY

At first glance a very difficult position, but on further examination matters clear up with surprising rapidity—White has a forced mate! It is the fortieth move, however, and Reshevsky in the game had only seconds to go (the reader might like to give himself, say, thirty seconds to see if he can spot what Sammy missed[*]). Reshevsky in fact played 40 QxPch???—Black's Bishop on QN1 had slipped his mind for a fatal instant—to which an amazed Savon replied 40 . . . BxQ, and White resigned.

Burt Hochberg, who was in the press room at the time, offers a vivid account of the reaction to Reshevsky's oversight:

> Werner Hug, the Swiss international master, came tearing into the room like a bull elephant, yelling: "Reshevsky blundered! My God, what a blunder! He had a mate and sacrificed his Queen!" Bronstein later told me it was "the blunder of five centuries." Anyway, a few minutes later, Reshevsky was pacing the press room looking absolutely distraught. In that atmosphere of general excitement at the approaching end of the tournament, Reshevsky stood alone—God only knows what was in his mind. No one dared speak to him.

[*] 40 P-NJ ch, KxP(40 . . . BxP; 41 Q-N7 mate); 41 P-R4 ch, KxP (41 . . . K-R3; 42 Q-N7 mate); 42 Q-B4 mate.

Savon, looking sheepish, his blond hair carelessly draped over one eye, followed his compatriots around as they examined the other positions on the demonstration boards. No one was speaking to him either; he looked like a little boy who had done something bad and was sure to be punished later, but for the moment was at his best behavior.

[*Chess Life and Review*, November 1973]

"The blunder of five centuries"—what previous blunder could Bronstein have had in mind?

VII

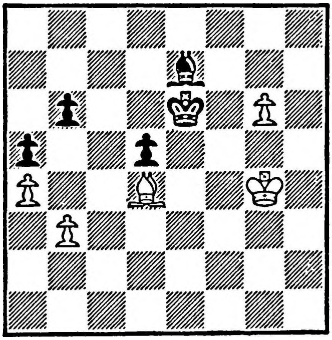
The Ending

The ending *should* be the easiest part of a chess game. After all, endings only come about after a great many pieces have been exchanged, and the fewer pieces there are on the board, the easier they should be to manipulate successfully. The beginner, who lacks the experience to deploy his forces to best advantage in the opening, and who finds himself hopelessly lost in the maze of tactical complications that arise in the average middle game, should feel much more at ease when the task before him is so greatly simplified. Surely he should be able to deploy two or three pieces and as many pawns with as much efficiency as a master, and the calculations necessary for him to stay on top of things should be well within his power.

As every experienced player knows, however, endgames are *hard*. Although it is impossible to say definitively which phase of the game is hardest in any absolute sense, it is safe to assert that the endgame poses challenges not only of strategy and tactics but of psychology sufficient to tax even the greatest players. Emanuel Lasker, world champion for twenty-seven years and generally regarded as the best endgame player of his day, remarked toward the end of his long career that if he should ever master the ending he would consider himself a good player. He was, by his own lights, not exaggerating: it is his standards rather than his veracity that we should call into question.

It is certainly true that the average player makes much more rapid progress in his studies of the opening and the middle game than of the ending, and that many a master who boasts of his prowess in complicated positions will, if the subject of the endgame should arise, quickly change the subject. Every grandmaster has stored in his memory a little collection of endgame positions that he would rather not talk about. The following exhibits are adduced not to denigrate the players—all top grandmasters—who went astray, but to demonstrate forcefully how difficult even the simplest-looking positions can be.

In the following position, from a game played at the Interzonal tournament at Portoroz, Yugoslavia, in 1958, Rudolfo Cardoso of the Philippines (Black) is dead lost against grandmaster Yuri Averbach of the Soviet Union:


CARDOSO

AVERBACH

To make matters worse, Averbach was at the time the world's leading academic authority on the endgame, the author of a three-volume work, *Chess Endings,* that devotes an entire volume to endgames with Bishop and pawns. Instead of resigning (objectively a good alternative), Cardoso played

1 . . . B-B3!!?

Averbach promptly replied

2 P-N7?? . . .

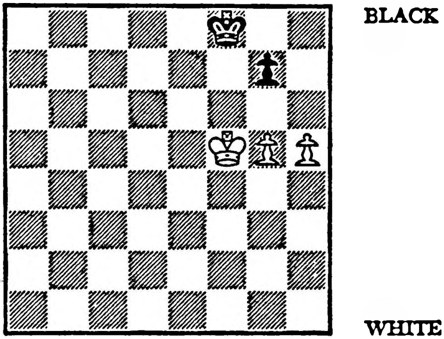
and the game continued:

2 . . .	BxP
3 BxB	K-Q3
4 B-Q4	K-B3
5 K-B5	P-N4
6 K-K6	PxP
7 PxP	Draw!

There is, of course, no way to queen a Rook pawn when the remaining Bishop cannot control the queening square (this is the first thing every student learns about Bishop and pawn endings). After 1 . . . B-B3!!?, Averbach should have played 2 BxB! KxB; 3 K-B4!, KxP; 4 K-K5!,

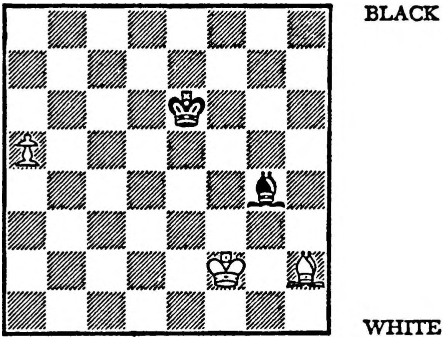
The leading American authority on the endgame is grandmaster Reuben Fine, whose monumental *Basic Chess Endings* (1941) is the indispensable single-volume reference work on the subject. In the almost six hundred pages of that book Fine treats systematically every type of endgame, and analyzes thousands of positions, for the most part with the greatest clarity and accuracy. Nevertheless, the work contains hundreds of mistakes, and it is a popular pastime among players of all classes to hunt them out. Lately they have been sending their trophies along to Larry Evans, who conducts a popular column in the magazine *Chess Life and Review* devoted to analytical questions. The two examples here are taken from Evans's column.

It is hardly surprising that a book of such magnitude should contain errors; what is to the point here is the apparent simplicity of the positions in which the errors were committed. Take this position, for example:



Fine says that after 1 . . . K-N1; 2 K-K6, K-R2; 3 K-B7, K-R1; 4 K-B8!! (but not 4 P-R6, K-R2!!!, drawing) White wins, which is correct—4 . . . K-R2; 5 P-N6ch, K-R1; 6 P-R6 and mate in two. But on 2 . . . K-B1 (instead of 2 . . .K-R2??) Black draws. Instead, White can win with 2 K-N6!, K-R1; 3 K-B7, etc.

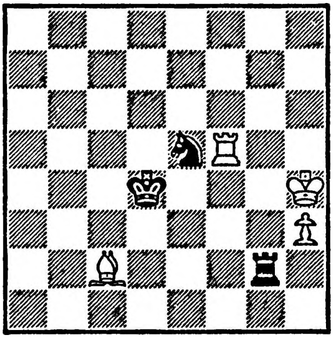
Or this one:



Fine claims a win for White by 1 P-R6, B-B4; 2 K-B3!, K-Q4; 3 P-R7, B-K5ch; 4 K-K3, and "Black must abandon the Bishop if he wants to clear the diagonal." But after 2 . . . B-Q6!; 3 P-R7, B-B5!; 4 P-R8/Q, B-Q4ch, etc., Black draws.

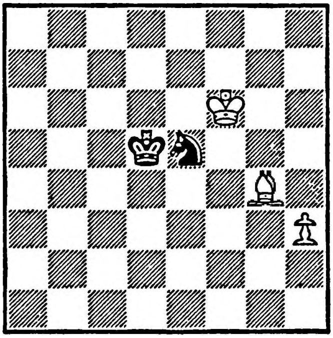
The next example has become notorious; it is from the second game of the 1971 candidates' match between Bobby

Fischer and Mark Taimanov of the Soviet Union. After seventy moves of an arduous struggle, the following position was reached:



White is a pawn ahead, but has little hope for victory, for one reason because his Bishop cannot control the square on which his Rook pawn must queen. To anticipate the subject matter of a later discussion, it is worth noting that Fischer probably chose to continue the game rather than agree to a draw at this point more to put psychological pressure on his opponent than in any real expectation of winning. Play therefore continued:

71	B-Q1	R-N1
72	B-N4	K-K5
73	K-N3	R-N2
74	R-B4ch	K-Q4
75	R-R4	N-N3
76	R-R6	N-K4
77	K-B4	N-N3ch
78	K-N5	N-K4ch
79	K-B5	R-B2ch
80	R-B6	RxRch
81	KxR	. . .



Now 81 . . . K-Q3 draws easily "because if the Bishop then moves along the Q1-R5 diagonal, . . . N-Q2ch will ensure that the Black King reaches the Kingside in time to cooperate with the Knight in stopping the Pawn, while if the Bishop moves along the B8-R3 diagonal, Black simply plays N-B6-R5 and stands there to be taken while the King runs straight for KR1" (Robert Byrne in *CL&R*). As Alexander Kotov, a Soviet grandmaster on the scene in his capacity as a journalist, rather tactlessly remarked, "A child could have drawn this ending." Taimanov, however, hardly a child but a human being and fallible as the rest of us, played

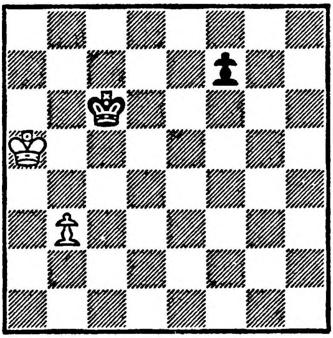
81 . . . K-K5??

and lost as follows:

82 B-B8	K-B5
83 P-R4	N-B6
84 P-R5	N-N4
85 B-B5	N-B6
86 P-R6	N-N4
87 K-N6	N-B6
88 P-R7	N-R5ch
89 K-B6	Resigns

This was the second of Taimanov's six consecutive losses, and surely did much to precipitate his plunge into the abyss.

Our last example is, in a way, the most telling, because, in terms of the amount of material remaining on the board, it is the simplest. In this position, from the game Lubomir Ljubojevich (Yugoslavia) vs. Walter Browne (U.S.A.), played at a tournament in Amsterdam in 1972, each grandmaster had only a King and pawn to worry about:

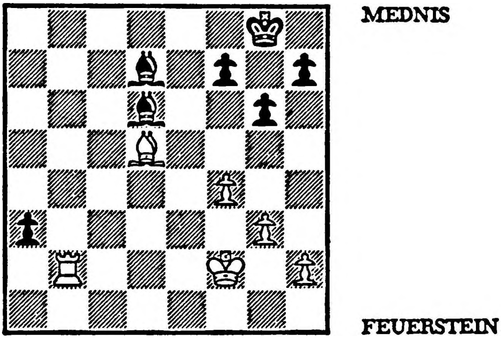


Black is to move, and the reader might like to make a quiz of it and decide what he would have played, and why, before reading on.

Browne played 1 . . . P-B4??, and drew: 2 K-N4, P-B5; 3 K-B4, P-B5; 4 K-Q3, and White can stop the pawn. The winning move is 1 . . . K-Q4!!, allowing White to queen first: 2 P-N4 (2 K-N4, K-Q5!), P-B4; 3 P-N5, P-B5; 4 P-N6, K-B3!; 5 K-R6, P-B6; 6 P-N7, P-B7; 7 P-N8/Q, P-B8/Qch; 8 K-R5, Q-R8ch; 9 K-N4, Q-N8ch; 10 any, QxQ and Black wins.

Elsewhere in this book we have remarked that if at any time during a game a player is offered a draw, he is within his rights to decline the offer, no matter what the position on the board may be. We failed then to add what is indeed self-evident: that a player who declines the offer of a draw does so at his own risk. If he subsequently blunders and loses, or even if in fact he had a lost game at the time he refused the offer (it is not unknown for *both* protagonists to show bad judgment), the recollection that he could have scored half a point just by nodding his head at the appropriate time is an additional source of annoyance.

The expression "playing for the loss" is a popular one with some annotators. It is applied, sometimes far too freely, to situations in which a player, having refused the offer of a draw, goes on to lose because some attempt to win recoils on his own head. Whether it should apply to situations like the following is debatable, although the suddenness with which the tables are turned here makes it as dramatic as anything of the kind in chess history:



This position is from a game between Arthur Feuerstein and Edmar Mednis, two top American masters, from the third Rosenwald Trophy tournament, held in New York in 1957. White has a very slight material advantage, in all probability insufficient to win. Mednis, having played 42 . . . P-R6, offered a draw. Feuerstein refused, "which," remarks Hans Kmoch in his notes to the game, "is quite comprehensible. His material advantage, though most likely insignificant, is worth working on. For an analysis during adjournment, he could have comfortably pondered over his next move and then sealed it. But no, he made this one rapidly." Feuerstein in fact played 43 R-N7??, to which Mednis replied 43 . . . B-B3!!. Now if

1) 44 BxB, P-R7; 45 R-R7, B-B4ch, or if
2) 44 R-R7, B-B4ch; 45 K-K2, BxR; 46 BxB, P-R7, or if
3) 44 BxPch, K-B1; 45 R-N6, B-B4ch, or finally if
4) 44 B-B3, BxR; 45 BxB, P-R7,

and, in each variation, Black wins. Feuerstein therefore resigned.

To decline the offer of a draw and be compelled to resign one move later must surely be one of the most unpleasant experiences the game of chess can afford. To "play for the loss," however, means more than simply to attempt to exploit a miniscule (or even nonexistent) advantage and fail to do so: it is to play on in an even or nearly even position merely in the hope that the opponent will blunder, or that some miracle will occur. To insist on further play under such circumstances is a dangerous tactic because it puts pressure, both physical and psychological, on both protagonists, and the one who employs it often forgets that he is as equally likely to succumb to it as his intended victim. The following exhibits should make this clear.

We begin with a well-known example from the game Tylor vs. Flohr, played in the tournament at Nottingham in 1936. It is well known not for its own sake—it is for the most part "a pretty dull affair"—but because of a note to it written by Alexander Alekhine, the annotator of the tournament book. The reader may, if he likes, skip down directly to the diagram; the earlier part of the game is included to serve as a preamble to the blunder on the 77th move, and to Alekhine's note.

In order to comprehend the human drama involved it is necessary to know that in 1936 the young Czech Salo Flohr was one of the most promising of a new generation of masters that included Reuben Fine and Samuel Reshevsky (two years later the International Chess Federation nominated him as the "official" challenger to the world champion) and that T. H. Tylor was one of the four Englishmen admitted to play at Nottingham for no better reason than that Nottingham is in England. He ultimately finished twelfth in the field of fifteen, with only his three compatriots behind him.

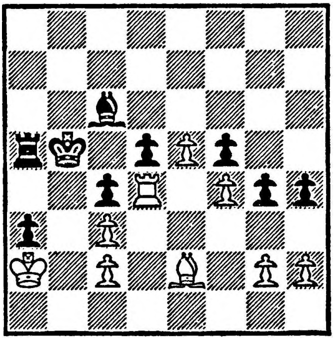
FRENCH DEFENSE

	White	*Black*		*White*	*Black*
	Tylor	Flohr		Tylor	Flohr
1	P-K4	P-K3	16	B-Q6	N-K2
2	P-Q4	P-Q4	17	BxN	QxB
3	N-QB3	B-N5	18	Q-N1	O-O-O
4	P-K5	P-QB4	19	Q-N5	P-N4
5	P-QR3	BxNch	20	Q-R5	K-N1
6	PxB	N-K2	21	KR-N1	Q-B2
7	N-B3	QN-B3	22	QxQch	KxQ
8	B-Q3	Q-B2	23	R-N5	P-N3
9	O-O	P-B5	24	B-B3	P-N5
10	B-K2	B-Q2	25	B-K2	P-R3
11	N-R4	N-B4	26	R-N4	B-Q2
12	NxN	PxN	27	K-B2	P-KR4
13	P-B4	B-K3	28	K-K3	P-R5
14	P-QR4	P-KR3	29	K-Q2	P-R4
15	B-R3	Q-Q2	30	R/4-N1	. . .

"From now on a pretty dull affair begins."—Alekhine.

30	. . .	R-R3	41	K-N2	PxP
31	K-K3	B-B3	42	QPxP	K-B3
32	B-B1	R-QN1	43	R-Q1	K-B4
33	R-N2	R-R2	44	K-R3	B-B3
34	R/2-R2	R-QR1	45	R/R-N1	R-R2
35	R-R3	R/2-R1	46	R-Q4	R/2-N2
36	R/3-R2	R/KR1-QN1	47	R/4-Q1	P-N4
37	R-N2	B-Q2	48	PxP	BxP
38	K-Q2	R-N2	49	R-Q4	B-K1
39	R/2-N1	R/2-N1	50	RxR	RxR
40	K-B1	P-B3	51	B-K2	R-KR2

White Tylor	*Black* Flohr
52 B-Q1	B-R4
53 K-R2	R-R1
54 K-R3	K-B3
55 K-R2	R-KN1
56 K-R3	R-N2
57 K-N2	K-B4
58 R-Q2	R-Q2
59 R-Q4	R-N2ch
60 K-R2	P-R5
61 R-Q2	R-N4
62 B-K2	R-N1
63 K-R1	R-Q1
64 R-Q4	R-KN1
65 R-Q2	R-N1
66 K-R2	R-QR1
67 B-Q1	P-QR6
68 B-K2	R-R2
69 B-Q1	B-N3
70 R-Q4	B-R4
71 R-Q2	B-K1
72 R-Q4	B-R4
73 R-Q2	B-K1
74 R-Q4	B-B3
75 B-K2	R-R4
76 B-Q1	K-N4
77 B-K2	. . .



"Phew! What a warm time we were in there but how keling is here the airabouts!" Flohr's attempts to grind Tylor down have earned him a moral victory: he has rather the better of the draw. With his last several moves, however, he has carefully laid the groundwork for the losing blunder, which he now proceeds to commit:

77 . . . K-R5??

This brings us to Alekhine's note:

> There were some voices in the Press which attributed Flohr's failure at Nottingham to "bad luck," and especially to the fact that he lost two points to the British players, against whom he had previously had good results. The present game, more than any other shows that such an appreciation is entirely wrong; because a master, who, not being able to win through his own ability, tries to gain a point by exhausting a less physically trained opponent, fully deserves to lose.

"Less physically trained" is of course a euphemism for something, but the point is well taken: many upsets occur because a strong player, confronted with a drawn position against a weaker opponent, simply refuses to admit (or perhaps he cannot bring himself to believe) that he is not going to win.

The game continued:

78 B-Q3!	. . .

Winning a pawn (if now 78 . . . B-Q2, then 79 BxQBP wins). As the previous pushing and pulling have worn down both players, however, neither is at his best in the few moves remaining.

78 . . .	R-N4
79 BxKBP	R-N7ch
80 K-R1	P-N6
81 P-R3?	. . .

Alekhine gives 81 PxP, PxP; 82 B-N4, K-N4; 83 B-Q1, K-B4; 84 P-B5, B-R5; 85 P-B6, BxP; 86 P-B7, R-N8ch; 87 K-R2, R-N7ch; 88 KxP, etc., as the winning line. The text move gives Black a chance . . .

81 . . .	K-N4
82 B-N6	K-B4
83 R-Q2	B-R5
84 R-K2	P-Q5?

. . . of which he fails to take advantage. Under normal circumstances an endgame player of Flohr's caliber would certainly have seen 84 . . . B-N6!, which saves half a point. "The chief variation," according to Alekhine, "would be 85 exchange if he tried 87 K-B1??, B-R5; 88 P-K7, R-N2; 89 P P-K6, R-R7ch; 86 K-N1, R-N7ch and White would lose the Queens, BxQ followed by P-R7, etc." Now Black loses routinely.

85 PxPch	K-N5
86 P-K6	P-B6
87 P-K7	P-R7
88 P-K8/Q	BxQ
89 RxB	K-B5
90 R-Q8	R-N8ch
91 KxP	R-N8
92 B-Q3ch	K-N5
93 R-N8ch	K-R5
94 B-K4	R-K8
95 R-K8	K-N5
96 P-B5	Resigns

Occasionally someone may choose to play on in even positions as a matter of policy throughout an entire tournament. He may decide to push himself and his opponents in this way with any of several reasons in mind. He may be one of the youngest of the competitors and hope to take advantage of his superior stamina. He may feel that his recent performances have shown a lack of fighting spirit, and choose this radical measure as an act of self-discipline. Or, he may simply be curious to see what will happen: how he himself and his opponents will stand up under this kind of pressure.

In 1940, when the Soviet Union annexed the Baltic states, the Estonian Paul Keres, then twenty-four years old, became a Soviet citizen perforce, and eligible to play in the annual U.S.S.R. championships. He did so for the first time in the Twelfth Championship, held in Moscow in the fall of that same year. That tournament resulted in a tie for first place between Igor Bondarevsky and Andrey Lilienthal, with Vasily Smyslov third, Keres fourth, and Isaac Boleslavsky and Mikhail Botvinnik tied for fifth and sixth.

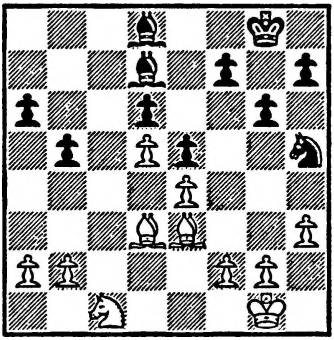
It was subsequently decided to hold a six-man match-tournament in the spring of 1941 for what was called the Absolute Championship of the U.S.S.R., in which those who took the first six places in the 1940 championship would be invited to compete. In a match-tournament, each of the contestants plays several games (in this tournament, four)—in effect a short match—against each of his opponents. It is more like a tournament than a series of matches, however, because the same opponents never meet twice in a row, and one has the opportunity to recover somewhat from the effects of a disastrous loss to one of the competitors before it is necessary to face him again.

Keres must have entered the Absolute Championship in a mood to experiment; the games he produced there are uncharacteristic in several ways. His opening play was less sharp than was usual with him, and his middle-game play less energetic. He strove for the most part to obtain quiet positions in which he had a slight advantage, and then attempted to exploit either his superior endgame skill, or superior stamina, or both. He won long, dull games from Smyslov and Lilienthal in this way, and finished the tournament in second place.

Nevertheless, he could hardly have been satisfied with his new approach to chess, as he abandoned it immediately thereafter. When he came to publish the huge collection of his games that appeared in this country under the title *The Chess Career of Paul Keres* he included no games from the 1941 Absolute Championship, and in fact doesn't even mention the tournament in his biographical preface to the appropriate section. Perhaps it was his game against Boleslavsky in the tenth round that deterred him from further experiments of the kind:

RUY LOPEZ

	White	*Black*		*White*	*Black*
	Boleslavsky	Keres		Boleslavsky	Keres
1	P-K4	P-K4	14	N-N3	R-Q1
2	N-KB3	N-QB3	15	P-Q5	N-QR4
3	B-N5	P-QR3	16	NxN	QxN
4	B-R4	N-B3	17	B-K3	B-Q2
5	O-O	B-K2	18	Q-Q2	QxQ
6	R-K1	P-QN4	19	NxQ	KR-QB1
7	B-N3	P-Q3	20	B-Q3	N-R4
8	P-B3	O-O	21	QR-B1	P-N3
9	P-KR3	N-QR4	22	N-N3	B-Q1
10	B-B2	P-B4	23	RxR	RxR
11	P-Q4	Q-B2	24	R-QB1	RxR
12	QN-Q2	BPxP	25	NxR	. . .
13	PxP	N-B3			



In this game it is Boleslavsky whose opening play seems deficient in enthusiasm—some of his moves (15 P-Q5 and 18 Q-Q2, for examples) indicate that he was playing for a draw. If so, he has all but achieved his objective: he has reached a position in which most of his opponents would have agreed to split the point. Keres, however, had won an arduous game from Lilienthal in the previous round in which he had entered the endgame with an advantage as small as the one he has here, and he can hardly be blamed for wanting to play on.

In the tournament book Botvinnik offers the following comment at this point:

> Black has rather the better chances on the K-side and his pieces are somewhat more actively posted.
>
> Keres decides to build up this slight advantage into victory. It must be assumed that in doing so he took the comparative inexperience of his opponent into account. However, he overestimated his own endurance and underestimated his resourceful opponent. Although finally Boleslavsky did run into a difficult situation, Keres actually grew tired first, and this factor decided the game.

White	*Black*
Boleslavsky	**Keres**
25 . . .	P-B4
26 P-B3	K-B2
27 N-K2	N-B3
28 K-B1	P-KR4
29 P-QN4	P-B5
30 B-KB2	P-N4
31 N-B3	N-K1
32 P-R3	N-B2
33 B-N6	K-K1
34 B-K2	B-B1
35 B-B2	N-R1
36 P-QR4?	. . .

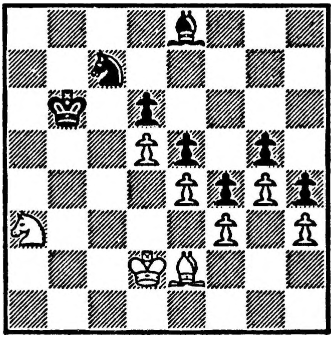
To prevent the maneuver . . . N-N3-B5, which was not really dangerous because White could have answered . . . N-B5 by BxN. Now Black will have the opportunity to open lines on the Queenside.

36 . . .	PxP
37 NxP	B-Q2
38 N-B3	P-R4!
39 PxP	BxP
40 N-N5	K-K2
41 N-R3	B-N3

White	*Black*
Boleslavsky	Keres
42 N-B4	BxB
43 KxB	B-K1
44 B-B1	N-B2
45 N-R5	B-Q2
46 B-K2	. . .

And not 46 N-B6ch??, BxN, when White would lose a pawn.

46 . . .	N-K1
47 N-B4	K-Q1
48 N-R3	N-B2
49 B-Q3	B-K1
50 B-K2	K-B1
51 P-N4	P-R5
52 K-K1	K-N2
53 K-Q2	K-N3



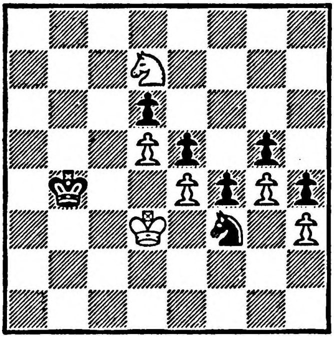
54 K-B3??	. . .

"A great mistake," says Botvinnik, "after which it is difficult for White to count on saving the game." He goes on to point out that with *54 N-B4ch, K-B4; 55 N-R5* White could have forced a draw immediately by repeating the position three times. Keres's plan to wear Boleslavsky down has apparently succeeded.

White	*Black*
Boleslavsky	Keres
54 . . .	K-B4
55 B-Q3	B-Q2
56 B-B2	B-N4
57 B-Q3	BxB
58 KxB	K-N5
59 N-B2ch	K-N6
60 N-K1	N-R3
61 K-Q2	K-B5
62 N-Q3	N-B2
63 K-B2	N-N4
64 N-N2ch	. . .

Botvinnik calls the decision to surrender the BP "psychologically quite sound," as after *64 N-K1* he would soon have found himself in *Zugzwang*.

64 . . .	K-B4
65 N-R4ch	K-N5
66 N-N6	N-Q5ch
67 K-Q3	NxP
68 N-Q7	. . .



68 . . .	N-Q5

Keres apparently rejected the obvious move *68 . . . N-N8!* because of the possible reply *69 NxP*, but an analysis by a

Russian amateur, A. Polyak, shows that this line would have won for Black: *68 . . . N-N8!; 69 NxP, PxN; 70 P-Q6, P-B6; 71 K-K3, P-B7; 72 KxP, NxPch;* etc. "This miscalculation of Keres is very significant," remarks Botvinnik; "it is a sign of his exhaustion. Even so, he finds another plan, which also should have led to a win."

69 N-B6	N-N6
70 K-K2	N-B4
71 K-B3	N-N6
72 K-K2	N-B4
73 K-B3	K-B6
74 N-K8	K-Q7
75 NxP	K-K8
76 N-B4	K-B8
77 N-Q2ch	K-N8
78 N-B4	N-Q2?

Botvinnik shows a win for Black with *78 . . . N-N6 79 K-K2 N-Q5ch 80 K-Q3 P-B6 81 P-Q6 P-B7 82 N-K3 N-K3 83 K-B4 N-B5 84 P-Q7 N-N7*. After the move in the text Black can no longer win.

79 N-Q6	N-B4
80 N-B4	N-Q2
81 N-Q6	K-R7??

After *81 . . . N-B4 82 N-B4* Black could have either claimed a draw by repetition or persisted in his feckless attempts to win. This move loses.

82 N-B7	KxP
83 NxNPch	K-R7
84 P-Q6	P-R6
85 NxP!	KxN
86 P-N5	N-B4
87 P-N6	N-K3
88 P-Q7	N-N4ch
89 K-K2	K-N6
90 P-Q8/Q	Resigns

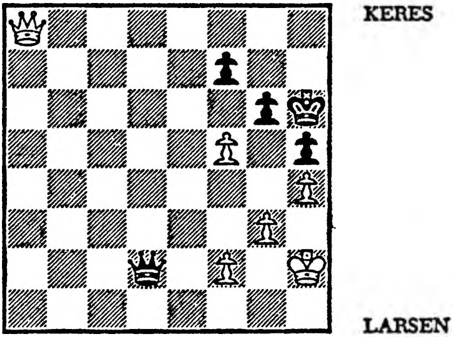
The kind of defeat that keeps one awake nights for weeks afterward.

In 1972 Paul Keres was fifty-six years old, and appropriately sadder and wiser. He was no longer the player he had been in his prime, as he himself cheerfully admitted, and he appeared in tournaments only occasionally. But when, in the tournament at San Antonio, Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen persisted in trying to win a drawn Queen-and-pawn endgame against him, he was easily capable of foiling the younger man at every turn. When Larsen tried *too* hard to win, Keres was surprised, grateful, and above all prepared to exact the full penalty. As former world champion Wilhelm Steinitz said toward the end of his long career, "I may be an old man, but if someone puts his finger in my mouth, I will bite it off."

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Larsen	Keres	Larsen	Keres
1 P-QB4	P-K3	18 KxB	P-QR4
2 N-QB3	P-QB4	19 B-B5	PxP
3 N-B3	N-KB3	20 PxP	R-K4
4 P-KN3	N-B3	21 P-K3	R-Q1
5 B-N2	B-K2	22 P-N5	N-K2
6 P-Q4	P-Q4	23 BxN	QxB
7 BPxP	KNxP	24 Q-N3	P-R4
8 NxN	PxN	25 R-Q4	R-Q3
9 PxP	BxP	26 R/1-Q1	Q-K1
10 P-QR3	B-B4	27 P-R4	R-QN3
11 P-QN4	B-QN3	28 RxP	RxNP
12 B-N2	O-O	29 RxR/K5	RxR
13 N-Q4	BxN	30 QxP	R-QB4
14 BxB	R-K1	31 R-Q6	P-N3
15 R-R2	Q-Q2	32 R-Q7	Q-K3
16 O-O	B-R6	33 R-Q8ch	K-N2
17 R-Q2	BxB	34 Q-N4	Q-B5

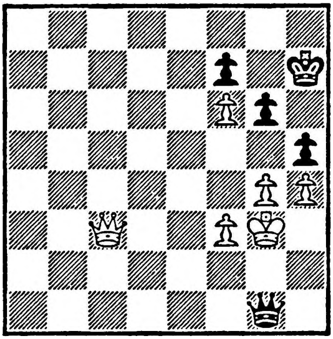
White Larsen	*Black* Keres	*White* Larsen	*Black* Keres
35 Q-N2ch	Q-B6	40 R-Q2	Q-N2
36 Q-N7	R-B4	41 Q-R8	K-R2
37 Q-K7	Q-N7	42 P-K4	Q-B6
38 Q-B8ch	K-R2	43 PxR	QxR
39 Q-N8ch	K-R3		



After having rather the better of the opening and early middle game, Keres made a few mistakes and found himself in a major piece ending a pawn down. Larsen was fully justified to play for a win; even though objectively a draw, the game was still "alive," as it were. From now on, however, it becomes progressively more difficult to justify further play, although from Larsen's point of view it is still quite safe. Play accordingly continued:

44 Q-N7	K-N1
45 P-B6	Q-Q1
46 Q-B6	K-R2
47 Q-QB3	Q-Q4ch
48 P-B3	Q-R7ch
49 K-R3	Q-N8
50 K-N2	Q-R7ch
51 K-B1	Q-R3ch

White	*Black*
Larsen	Keres
52 K-K1	Q-K3ch
53 K-B2	Q-R7ch
54 K-N1	Q-N8ch
55 K-N2	Q-R7ch
56 K-R3	Q-N8
57 P-N4	Q-R8ch
58 K-N3	Q-N8ch



59 K-B4?	. . .

If the reader cannot himself guess that Larsen should have allowed the perpetual check and gone home with half a point, he hasn't been paying attention. (That's all right—Larsen's troubles came from paying too much attention.) This blunder is less significant in itself than in that it prepares the ensuing, decisive blunder.

59 . . .	Q-R7ch
60 K-N5??	. . .

After 60 K-K4 QxP Black would have had slightly the better of it; whether he would have played on is difficult to say.

60 . . .	Q-N6!

And Black wins. White is in *Zugzwang*.

White Larsen	*Black* Keres
61 Q-K3	PxP
62 Q-B4	QxP
63 QxP	Q-K6ch
64 Q-B4	Q-K7!
65 Q-N3	Q-N4ch
66 K-B4	Q-B4ch
67 K-K3	QxP

For the poetry lovers among us, a little Chaucer:

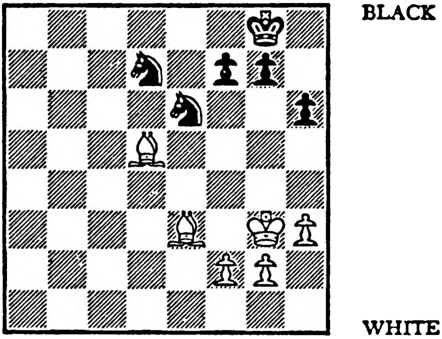
> Tragedie is to seyn a certeyn storie,
> As olde bookes maken us memorie,
> Of hym that stood in greet prosperitee,
> And is yfallen out of heigh degree
> Into myserie, and endeth wreccedly.

White Larsen	*Black* Keres	*White* Larsen	*Black* Keres
68 Q-N5	Q-B8	81 Q-B7ch	K-R5
69 Q-N4	Q-K8ch	82 Q-B8	K-N6
70 K-Q3	Q-K3	83 Q-R3ch	Q-B6
71 Q-KB4	K-N2	84 Q-Q6ch	K-N7
72 Q-Q4ch	P-B3	85 Q-Q2ch	K-R6
73 Q-QN4	Q-B4ch	86 Q-Q7ch	P-B4
74 K-K2	K-R3	87 Q-KN7	P-N5
75 K-K1	K-R4	88 Q-R8ch	K-N6
76 Q-QB4	Q-N5	89 Q-K5ch	P-B5
77 Q-B5ch	KxP	90 Q-N8	Q-B6ch
78 Q-K7	Q-B4	91 K-Q1	K-N7
79 Q-N4ch	K-R4	Resigns	
80 Q-QB4	P-N4		

A close study of the foregoing examples should prove sufficient to deter the practical player from ever trying to push his luck—or his opponent. It is important to add, however, that the attitude of many masters and grandmasters toward "drawish" positions has changed somewhat in recent years, thanks in large measure to the attitude and practice of a single player: Bobby Fischer. Fischer has demonstrated time after time that he can score full points in games that others among the top players would have abandoned as drawn, and his example has on occasion prompted those others to play on for a few more moves rather than shake hands as they would hitherto have done. Often they have found that they too could "make something out of nothing," as the saying is, a discovery at once gratifying, profitable, and thought-provoking. *Nihil sine magno labore . . .*

Fischer's disposition to play on in such games as his colleagues would have conceded to hold no winning chances is prompted not only, as with Flohr, by confidence in the superiority of his technical skills, but by his conviction that chess is a struggle in which no quarter should be asked or given, and that the struggle can be waged even in the most sterile-looking positions. More often than not, his determination is rewarded, as in the game against Saidy, below.

Fischer has, of course, suffered his disappointments, and criticisms. An excellent example of both is his game against Larsen in the tournament at Zürich in 1959, in which, after fifty moves, the following position was reached:



Tal, annotating the game in the tournament book, writes:

"What's the matter? Why is the game not drawn here?", the reader might rightfully ask. Well, Bobby continues woodpushing for another 40 moves. The young American assumes somewhat naively that we in Europe could lose such endgames with Black. We give the rest of the game without comment.

And, after the game was finally drawn (on the ninety-second move!) he adds, "A painful game for the players, for the tournament director, for the annotator, but especially for the poor reader!"

As we said earlier, however, Fischer's successes far outnumber his failures. This next game is of considerable historical interest: by winning it, Fischer scored his unprecedented eleventh straight victory in the 1963–64 U.S. championship, the only time anyone has ever made a clean sweep in any tournament with a national title at stake. Probably any other player, after he had won ten games in a row, would have tried as hard as Fischer did to win the eleventh. The real point is that almost any other player, after he had won, say, seven games, would have relaxed and made several short draws, and so never found himself in the situation Fischer did against Saidy.

We quote from the contemporary account in *Chess Life:*

On January 2, 1964 Bobby Fischer sat down to play Dr. Anthony Saidy in the final round of the tournament. Saidy, a medical doctor on duty with the Peace Corps in Puerto Rico, had been given leave in order to play in the U.S. Championship and had produced some of the best chess of the tournament. He had victories over Weinstein, Bisguier, Mednis, Addison, and Donald Byrne to his credit and was in the running for second place. Moreover, he had the White pieces. If Fischer was to make a clean sweep of the tournament, he had his work cut out for him.

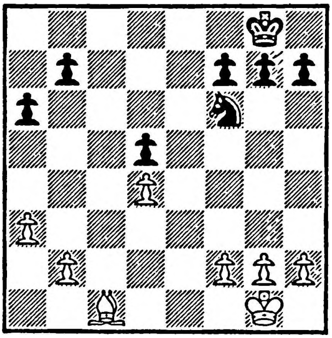
The game was played before a large audience in the Henry Hudson Ballroom, and as it went on it became more and more difficult to see how Fischer could possibly win it. Queens were exchanged early and the game worked around to an ending in which Fischer had a knight against a not-too-good bishop but with a completely symmetrical pawn position. Any kind of decisive breakthrough seemed quite unlikely and a lot of very subtle maneuvering took place without Fischer being able to work up any real winning prospects.

The time for adjournment arrived and Saidy thought for about forty minutes before sealing his move. The consensus of expert opinion in the audience was that the game would almost certainly be drawn. As the spectators left, most of them no doubt thought that they had seen Fischer's bid for a record sweep halted in the final round.

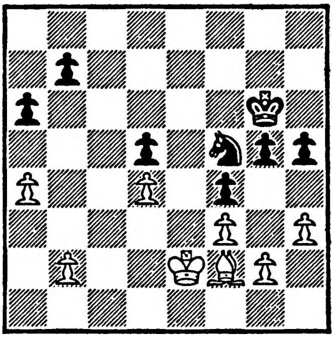
It turned out, however, that the sealed move was a mistake. About a half hour after play was resumed, Fischer, with a neat knight maneuver, forced Saidy's resignation and news of his history-making record was flashed to the world.

ENGLISH OPENING

White Saidy	*Black* Fischer	*White* Saidy	*Black* Fischer
1 P-QB4	P-QB4	13 O-O	P-QR3
2 N-KB3	N-QB3	14 N-Q4	NxN
3 P-Q4	PxP	15 QxN	QxQ
4 NxP	N-B3	16 PxQ	QR-B1
5 N-QB3	P-K3	17 B-Q1	B-B7
6 N/4-N5	B-N5	18 B-K3	BxB
7 P-QR3	BxNch	19 KRxB	R-B7
8 NxB	P-Q4	20 R-Q2	KR-B1
9 P-K3	O-O	21 RxR	RxR
10 PxP	PxP	22 R-QB1	RxRch
11 B-K2	B-B4	23 BxR	. . .
12 N-N5	Q-N3		



White Saidy	*Black* Fischer	*White* Saidy	*Black* Fischer
23 . . .	N-Q2	32 B-Q2	K-N3
24 K-B1	N-B1	33 K-K3	N-K3
25 K-K2	N-K3	34 K-Q3	K-B4
26 K-Q3	P-KR4	35 B-K3	P-B3
27 B-K3	K-R2	36 K-K2	K-N3
28 P-B3	K-N3	37 K-Q3	P-B4
29 P-QR4	K-B4	38 K-K2	P-B5
30 K-K2	P-KN4	39 B-B2	N-N2
31 K-B2	N-Q1	40 P-R3	N-B4



41 K-Q3	P-N5	50 K-Q3	N-B4
42 RPxP	PxP	51 B-B2	N-R5
43 PxP	N-R3	52 P-R5	NxP
44 B-K1	NxP	53 K-B3	K-B6
45 B-Q2	K-B4	54 B-N1	K-K7
46 B-K1	N-B3	55 B-R2	P-B6
47 B-R4	N-K5	56 B-N3	N-K6
48 B-K1	K-N5	Resigns	
49 K-K2	N-N6ch		

VIII

The Last Round

In most sporting events the element of suspense plays an important role in the spectators' enjoyment of the game. They come partly to witness a drama—to follow the changing fortunes of the protagonists, whether individuals or teams, and ultimately to see which side will win. Thus the baseball games decided by a ninth-inning rally, or the football games won in the last few seconds of play, usually prove to be the most memorable, because they prolong the dramatic tension until the very end. If the game is also crucial in a larger context, such as a pennant race or a long-standing rivalry, the suspense is even more pronounced.

At any baseball or football game, of course, there is some number of spectators who love the game for its own sake and have come to watch the play without caring especially which side wins. Among the spectators at a chess tournament, this number might be expected to be proportionately much greater: many in the audience at chess events are practicing players themselves, and have come mostly to pick up pointers that will enable them to improve their own game, and others are inveterate kibbitzers who just like to watch chess, no matter who is playing it. Nevertheless even to them the best games are those in which the chances are evenly balanced until the last few moves, and if the outcome of the game is crucial to the result of the tournament, even the most disinterested spectator can somehow hardly fail to be caught up in the excitement.

The attitude of the competitors themselves toward this sporting element in the game, of course, varies greatly from player to player. Some men thrive on the tension generated at critical moments, others accept it stoically as a necessary evil, and some dread it, just as there are some who dread what is romantically called the "moment of truth" in any endeavor. For virtually all tournament players, however, a crucial last-round game is a tremendous strain, under which the mind is liable to play strange tricks, either rising to unprecedented heights of brilliance or falling into abysses of unexampled obtuseness. Perhaps the best example in all of chess history of what can happen to even the best players under such conditions is the game Rubinstein-Nimzovich from the last round of the tournament at San Sebastian, 1912. At the start of the game Nimzovich was leading Rubinstein by half a point, and the tournament book (edited by Jacques Nieses) captioned the game "*Entscheidungspartie um den ersten und zweiten Preis*" (The game to decide the allotment of the first and second prizes):

OLD INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Rubinstein	Nimzovich
1 P-Q4	**N-KB3**

This is almost a reflex action with many players today, but in 1912 it was still unusual; Lasker, whose notes in the *Berliner Zeitung am Mitlag* were reproduced in the tournament book, remarks that 1 . . . P-Q4 is "less obliging." By the time this tournament was played Nimzovich was well known to be a player who went his own way in the openings.

2 P-B4	P-Q3
3 N-KB3	QN-Q2
4 N-B3	P-K4
5 P-K4	B-K2
6 B-K2	O-O
7 O-O	R-K1
8 Q-B2	B-B1
9 P-QN3	P-B3

Lasker commends 9 . . . P-KN3 followed by . . . B-N2, . . . PxP and . . . N-K4 as "sounder strategy," but the text move also fits into the system as the Black queen will often find a good post on the Q1-QR4 diagonal. The opening play turns out to be surprisingly "modern" (see the next note).

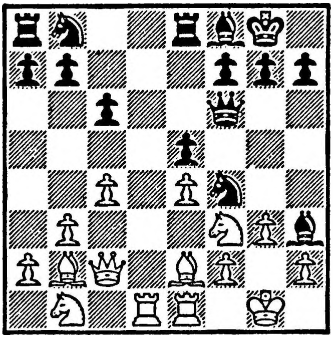
10 B-N2	N-R4
11 P-N3	. . .

When this position arose by a different order of moves in the game Stahlberg-Kotov in the Zürich, 1953, candidates' tournament, Black chose 11 . . . P-KN3 here, and play continued 12 QR-Q1, KN-B3; 13 P-Q5, P-B4; 14 N-KR4, B-N2; 15 P-QR3, N-N3; 16 B-B3, R-B1, with about equal chances. Nimzovich wants to use his Queen Bishop for an immediate Kingside attack and so clears the way for it by undeveloping his Queen Knight, but the attack, as Lasker remarks, *"der Bluff ist."*

11 . . .	N-N1
12 QR-Q1	Q-B3
13 N-N1!	. . .

White, who is better developed, can afford such luxuries, and the opening of the QR1-KR8 diagonal for the Queen Bishop turns out to be very important—*how* important, neither player quite grasped until it was too late.

13 . . .	B-R6
14 KR-K1	N-B5!?
15 PxP	PxP



NIMZOVICH

RUBINSTEIN

16 NxP!	. . .

The refutation.

16 . . .	RxN
17 B-KB1	. . .

After the simple 17 BxR, NxBch; 18 QxN, QxB; 19 R-Q8, White has a winning bind. The text move is also good, but more complicated.

17 . . .	N-Q2
18 Q-Q2	. . .

But now White should play 18 BxB, NxBch; 19 K-N2, when Black must lose material. The game has become very difficult for both sides.

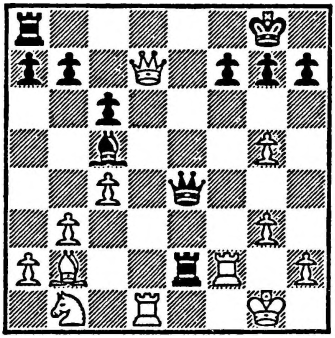
18 . . .	BxB
19 RxB	N-R6ch
20 K-N2	N-N4

Threatening 21 . . . Q-B6ch; 22 K-N1, N-R6 mate.

21 P-B4	Q-N3
22 PxN	RxP

On 22 . . . R-K2 (22 . . . QxPch?; 23 K-R3!, R-K2; 24 QR-K1 and wins) Lasker gives 23 B-R3, QxPch; 24 K-N1, P-QB4; 25 KR-K1, Q-Q5ch; 26 QxQ with a won ending for White.

23 QxN	R-K7ch
24 R-B2	Q-K5ch
25 K-N1	B-B4??



Black can now draw by 25 . . . RxR; 26 KxR, Q-B7ch!; 27 Q-Q2, B-B4ch; 28 K-N2, Q-K5ch; 29 K-R3, Q-B4ch; 30 K-N3 (not 30 K-R4?, P-KR3!, etc.) The text is an almost incredible blunder, which can be explained only with reference to the taxing circumstances under which the game was played. Black's last move allows mate in two by 26 QxPch, etc.

26 B-Q4??	. . .

. . . which White also overlooks. Fortunately for him, he remains a piece ahead with an easy win.

26 . . . BxB
27 QxB R-K8ch
28 R-B1 RxRch
29 KxR Q-R8ch
30 K-B2 QxPch
31 K-B3 P-B3

A good cheapo, under the circumstances; Black would answer 31 PxP? by 31 . . . R-KB1!, and so retain some attacking chances. Rubinstein, however, has made his blunder for the day.

32 Q-Q2 Q-R6
33 Q-Q7 P-KB4

Was nun kommt, remarks Lasker, *ist Routine.* English translation: "Why doesn't Black give up already?"

34 N-B3 Q-R4ch
35 K-N2 QxP
36 Q-K6ch K-R1
37 N-K2 Q-R4
38 R-Q7 R-K1
39 N-B4 RxQ

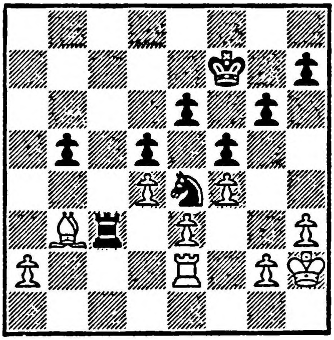
Perhaps hoping for 40 R-Q8ch??, Q-K1!?

40 NxQ Resigns

What was doubtless the most chaotic final round in the history of chess came as a fitting climax to one of the most exciting tournaments ever played. We have already attempted to convey some notion of the atmosphere of the tournament at Nottingham in 1936 and it is hardly surprising under such circumstances that when the tournament entered its final day no one was quite himself anymore.

At the start of the last round Botvinnik and Capablanca were tied for first place with scores of 9½–3½. On the face of it Botvinnik had the better chances to win his final game: he was playing the English champion William Winter, who was dead last in the standings, while Capablanca was matched with the veteran Bogolyubov. Alekhine was in third place, half a point behind the leaders, but with a bye in the last round was almost sure to be overtaken by one or more of the three combatants—Euwe, Fine, and Flohr—who were then tied for fourth through seventh places, half a point behind him. Alekhine must have made an amusing spectacle as he sat among the spectators or paced back and forth in the lobby—at first doubtless chafed at his inability to do anything that could mend his fortune, but by the end of the round secretly glad that he had had no part in the wacky events of the day.

Botvinnik was completely outplayed by Winter, and when, in the following position,



the players agreed to a draw, Winter still might have had excellent winning chances ("... after 38 ... K-K2; 39 B-B2 followed by BxN the R-ending would be quite hopeless for White," writes Alekhine in the tournament book, adding that "It is a pity a game of such importance should have remained practically a torso.") Why Winter declined to play on has remained a mystery; possibly he had been exhausted by his previous efforts and did not think that further struggle, which, had it been crowned with success, would have won for him only the company of one of his compatriots in last place, was worth the trouble.

Capablanca played an eventful draw with Bogolyubov, in which he first secured a winning position, then blundered and found himself compelled to fight for his life in the ending.

Fine managed to defeat T. H. Tylor only after the Englishman threw away a big positional advantage and then made several weak moves to fudge his chances for a draw.

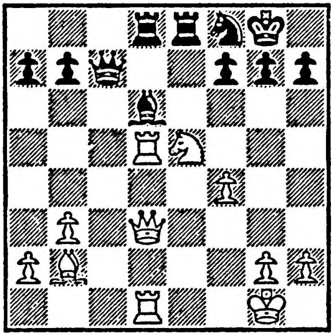
But the most embarrassing moments were suffered jointly by Euwe and his opponent Sir George Thomas. Sir George, an exemplar of traditional British sportsmanship throughout his long career, was described by Fine as the Nestor of the English players:

> Sir George . . . was a formal, distinguished-looking gentleman who kept himself somewhat aloof from the other masters. One had the feeling that he looked upon himself as a representative of the traditions of the British aristocracy and felt like something of an anomaly in a chess tournament.

After this game he may well have wished he had stuck to badminton, the other sport in which he represented his country in international competition. Euwe, though doubtless relieved at the outcome, could hardly have been satisfied with the way it had come about:

ALEKHINE'S DEFENSE

White	*Black*	*White*	*Black*
Thomas	Euwe	Thomas	Euwe
1 P-K4	N-KB3	12 B-N2	O-O
2 P-K5	N-Q4	13 KR-Q1	Q-B2
3 P-Q4	P-Q3	14 R-Q3	KR-Q1
4 N-KB3	B-N5	15 QR-Q1	N-B1
5 B-K2	P-QB3	16 N-K4	NxN
6 O-O	PxP	17 QxN	B-Q3
7 NxP	BxB	18 P-Q5	KPxP
8 QxB	P-K3	19 PxP	R-K1
9 P-QN3	N-Q2	20 P-B4	PxP
10 P-QB4	N/4-B3	21 RxP	QR-Q1
11 N-QB3	B-N5	22 Q-Q3	. . .



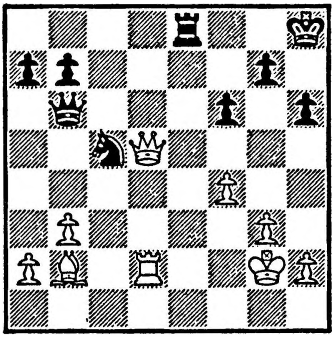
22 . . .	N-K3??

Throughout his career Euwe has been known as the grandmaster most prone to gross oversights. This one ought to have cost him a piece by 23 RxB, RxR; 24 QxR, R-Q1; 25 N-Q7!. Instead . . .

23 P-N3??	. . .

In pointing out the simple win missed by Sir George, Alekhine calls Euwe's good fortune "a new chapter on the theme of 'Luck in Chess'!" While this is an exaggeration it is surely fair to say that the world champion has already had more than his share of luck in this game. But there is worse to come!

23 . . .	B-B4ch
24 K-N2	B-N3
25 Q-QB3	RxR
26 RxR	P-B3
27 N-B4	Q-B3
28 NxB	QxN
29 R-Q2	N-B4
30 Q-B4ch	K-R1
31 Q-Q5	P-KR3



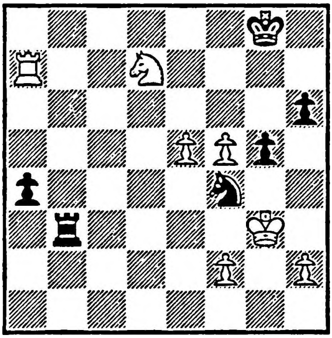
32 K-R3??	. . .

We can do no better than to quote Alekhine's furious note: "The losing move, for it allows the victorious intrusion of Black's Kt. Instead of it White had a choice of safe moves, such as B-R3, R-QB2, or even P-KR4, *as Black was not threatening anything* (if 32 . . . N-K5, then 33 R-K2). It is a tragicomedy of errors."

32 . . .	N-K5
33 R-QB2	Q-K6
34 Q-Q4	Q-KB6
35 Q-N1	P-KR4
36 B-Q4	R-Q1
37 Q-K3 and resigns	

Because of 37 . . . Q-B8ch; 38 K-R4, Q-Q8; 38 R-N2, Q-Q8.

A funny thing also happened to Salo Flohr on the way to victory over Dr. Tartakover. In the following position



Tartakover (Black) had just played 51 . . . R-N6ch; all Flohr now needed to do to make his opponent resign is to have replied with *52 K-N4* (*52 . . . R-N5; 53 P-B6!*, and there is no good discovered check). Instead he played 52 P-B3?? and after 52 . . . R-N7 was compelled by the mate threat to take a perpetual check: 53 N-B6ch, K-B1; 54 R-R8ch, K-B2; 55 R-R7ch, K-B1; 56 R-R8ch, K-B2; 57 R-R7ch, K-B1; Draw. But there was in fact no perpetual check; Black could have tried to play for a win with 56 . . . K-K2; 57 N-Q5ch, NxN; 58 R-R7ch, K-K1; 59 R-R8ch, K-Q2; 60 R-R7ch, K-B1; 61 P-B6, R-N5, etc. As Alekhine said, "another comedy of errors."

Of all the players who entered the last round still in contention for a high prize only Samuel Reshevsky kept his head and won a good game from Dr. Vidmar. Thus the final standings were Botvinnik and Capablanca 10–4, Euwe, Fine and Reshevsky 9½–4½, Alekhine 9–5, etc.

The fourth annual José Capablanca Memorial tournament, held in Havana, Cuba, in the late summer of 1965, was noteworthy for several reasons. First, it prompted the return of Bobby Fischer to competition after a mysterious absence of more than a year and a half. His last previous effort had been in the United States championship of 1963–64, in which he had scored 11–0, and chess fans throughout the world were understandably anxious to see how he would fare against the presumably stronger field of an international tournament.

Second, Fischer played his games in this event not, like the other participants, in the ballroom of the Cuba Libre Hotel in Havana, but in a back room of the Marshall Chess Club in New York. At that time, United States citizens required a special dispensation from the State Department to travel to Cuba; Fischer had applied for permission to go as a journalist, ostensibly to cover the tournament for *Chess Life and Review* (as well as to play, of course), but his application had been denied. Once granted that the State Department is empowered to restrict the movements of U.S. citizens abroad, its ruling was logical; as Joe Reinhardt put it, "Fischer would have gone to Havana with a prize in mind—only it wouldn't have been the Pulitzer Prize. Like any sensible person, Bobby would rather be Superman than Clark Kent."

Nevertheless, thanks to hurried negotiations between the United States Chess Federation and the tournament organizers, Fischer's comeback took place after all. With the consent of all the other competitors, it was arranged that he would participate from New York, with the moves of his games transmitted to Havana by teletype. Although there was ample precedent for the use of the teletype to transmit chess moves —the 1945 U.S.A.–U.S.S.R. match, for example—this was the first time that any single player had ever taken part in a tournament in this way, with the other competitors all meeting over the board. (It has also proven to be the last.)

Third, the tournament itself took rather a strange turn, with a finish as bizarre as any in the history of chess. Before play began, it was widely supposed that the favorites were, besides Fischer, former world champion Vasily Smyslov of the Soviet Union and his compatriot Yefim Geller, while the best chance to stage an upset was accorded to yet another Russian, Ratmir Cholmov, a very strong player who was making one of his rare appearances outside his native land. By midway in the tournament, however, it was obvious that there was one competitor whose chances had been insufficiently weighed by the forecasters—Yugoslav grandmaster Boris Ivkov.

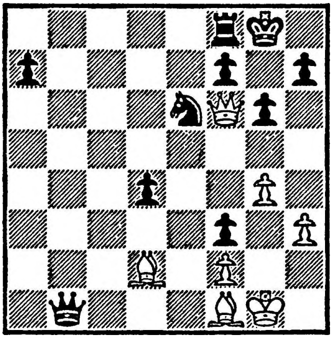
Ivkov, of course, was hardly of unknown quality: many times champion of Yugoslavia, he was also one of the most active of international players, and could usually be counted on to score well in any company. He was nevertheless not regarded as the kind of player who wins tournaments; his last big success had come as long before as 1959. In Havana, however, he was in excellent form. At the start of the eleventh round he was alone in first place, and had scored well-earned victories over both Smyslov and Fischer. In the thirteenth round, he won the following impressive game against the Dutchman Jan Hein Donner, later awarded the brilliancy prize:

RUY LOPEZ

	White Ivkov	*Black* Donner
1	**P-K4**	**P-K4**
2	**N-KB3**	**N-QB3**
3	**B-N5**	**P-QR3**
4	**B-R4**	**N-B3**
5	**O-O**	**NxP**
6	**P-Q4**	**P-QN4**
7	**B-N3**	**P-Q4**
8	**PxP**	**B-K3**
9	**Q-K2**	**N-B4**
10	**R-Q1**	**NxB**
11	**BPxN**	**B-K2**
12	**N-B3**	**O-O**
13	**B-K3**	**N-R4**
14	**QR-B1**	**N-N2**
15	**N-K4**	**B-KN5**
16	**P-KR3**	**BxN**
17	**QxB**	**P-QB3**
18	**N-N3**	**R-B1**
19	**N-B5**	**P-N3**
20	**RxQP**	**Q-K1**
21	**B-R6**	**Resigns**

Despite a subsequent loss to Cholmov, the start of the penultimate round saw Ivkov a full point ahead of his nearest rival (the standings were: Ivkov 15–4, Smyslov and Geller 14–5, Cholmov and Fischer 13–6). Not only that, he had by far the easiest schedule in the last two rounds of any of the contenders: in the twentieth round he would have the Black pieces against local master Gilberto Garcia, destined to finish the tournament in a tie for last place. In the final round he would have White against grandmaster Karl Robatsch of Austria, who was not in contention, and would probably agree to a quick draw if his opponent needed one. Thus Ivkov's victory seemed assured, a sporting, if not a mathematical, certainty.

A funny thing happened to Ivkov, however, on his way to collect first prize. His game with Garcia was, as anticipated, a one-sided affair: Ivkov outplayed him in the opening and throughout the middle game methodically augmented his superiority. By the time they reached the 36th move, the Yugoslav grandmaster had a winning advantage in material:



White is the exchange and three pawns down and has no threats, or reasonable hope of counterplay. His position is, in fact, resignable, and he doubtless would have resigned if his opponent had not been in time trouble. After 36 . . . Q-Q8 (among many other moves), followed by . . . R-N1 and . . . R-N8, or . . . P-QR4-5-6, etc., as circumstances dictated, Ivkov would have won the game and the tournament, and thus scored the biggest triumph of his long career. Instead he played 36 . . . P-Q6?????? (probably the most painful blunder of all time) and, after 37 B-B3, quietly resigned.

Even after this debacle, however, Ivkov still stood well. In the twentieth round Smyslov had drawn with Geller and Cholmov with Dr. Heinz Lehmann of West Germany; only Fischer had gained a full point by beating Francisco Perez of

Cuba. Therefore a draw with Robatsch in the final round would have assured Ivkov of a tie for first place even if Smyslov or Geller won his last game, and a victory would have netted him clear first no matter what his rivals did. Instead, no doubt badly shaken by his blunder of the previous round, Ivkov could manage neither:

RUY LOPEZ

	White	*Black*		*White*	*Black*
	Ivkov	Robatsch		Ivkov	Robatsch
1	P-K4	P-K4	26	QxR	Q-B3
2	N-KB3	N-QB3	27	N-B3	P-K5
3	B-N5	P-QR3	28	N-Q4	Q-Q4
4	B-R4	N-B3	29	R-R6	BxN
5	O-O	B-K2	30	QxB	QxQ
6	R-K1	P-QN4	31	PxQ	R-N1
7	B-N3	P-Q3	32	K-B1	N-Q4
8	P-B3	O-O	33	BxP	NxP
9	P-KR3	N-QR4	34	R-R7	K-B1
10	B-B2	P-B4	35	P-Q5	R-Q1
11	P-Q4	Q-B2	36	P-B6	PxP
12	QN-Q2	N-B3	37	P-B3	NxP
13	PxBP	PxP	38	R-N7	P-B4
14	N-B1	B-K3	39	B-N1	P-N5
15	N-K3	QR-Q1	40	K-B2	P-B5
16	Q-K2	P-B5	41	BxP	P-N6
17	N-B5	BxN	42	P-N4	N-B6
18	PxB	KR-K1	43	R-N4	R-Q7ch
19	N-N5	N-N1	44	K-K1	R-Q8ch
20	B-K3	QN-Q2	45	K-B2	R-B8
21	P-QR4	N-B4	46	P-R4	K-N2
22	BxN	BxB	47	B-B5	P-N7
23	PxP	PxP	48	P-R5	P-N8/Q
24	P-QN4	B-N3	49	BxQ	NxB
25	KR-Q1	RxRch	50	K-K2	R-B7ch

White Ivkov	*Black* Robatsch	*White* Ivkov	*Black* Robatsch
51 K-Q1	N-R6	56 R-KB8	P-B7ch
52 R-R4	R-QR7	57 K-Q2	R-R8
53 P-N5	P-B6	58 RxPch	K-N1
54 P-R6ch	K-R1	Resigns	
55 R-R8ch	K-R2		

In the final round too Smyslov beat Zbygnev Doda of Poland to finish first by half a point; the final standings were: Smyslov 15½–5½, Fischer, Geller and Ivkov 15–6, and Cholmov 14–6½. But one of the best results of his career must still seem to Boris Ivkov an unmitigated failure.

Sometimes the result of a single game can exert an influence over a man's career wholly out of proportion to its objective importance. The best example is perhaps Boris Spassky's last-round defeat by Mikhail Tal in the 1958 U.S.S.R. championship. This tournament, held in Tal's home town of Riga, Latvia, was also a zonal; from it, Tal went on to qualify for his victorious 1960 match against Botvinnik for the world championship, while Spassky needed to wait until 1966 for his first shot at the title.

Ever since Spassky's excellent showing, at the age of fifteen, at the 1953 interzonal at Bucharest, it was generally acknowledged that he would one day be world champion. His subsequent performances, which included a tie for first place with Yuri Averbach and Mark Taimanov in the 1956 U.S.S.R. championship (he fell ill during the playoff and finished third), indicated that he was making normal progress—if the progress of a future world champion can ever be called normal—toward that goal. In the 1957 championship, the first of Tal's big successes, Spassky was fourth.

The tournament in Riga began very well for Spassky: after a fine tenth-round victory over David Bronstein he had a score of 7–2 (including an early bye). Although later losses to Gurgenidze and Kotov kept him out of first place, he seemed a safe bet to qualify for the interzonal; with three rounds to go he was only half a point behind the leader, Tigran Petrosian. In the next two rounds, however, he scored only half a point.

Tal, meanwhile, had started slowly, but by scoring seven points out of his last eight games up to the final round had just managed to edge past Petrosian. Thus the last-round encounter between Spassky and Tal was a crucial one for both players: Spassky needed a victory to qualify for the interzonal, Tal one to retain his championship. The game they produced was amply marked by that extreme tension we have seen to be characteristic of such occasions:

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Spassky	Tal
1 P-Q4	N-KB3
2 P-QB4	P-K3
3 N-QB3	B-N5
4 P-QR3	. . .

The sharp Saemisch Variation, plausible under the circumstances. Tal must have been well prepared for 4 B-N5, with which Spassky had defeated Smyslov at Bucharest.

4 . . .	BxNch
5 PxB	P-B4
6 P-K3	N-B3
7 B-Q3	P-K4

This move, instead of the usual 7 . . . P-Q3 or 7 . . . 0-0, was known to the analysts but had never before been tried in so important a game. Although doubtless taken by surprise, Spassky finds an effective way to meet it.

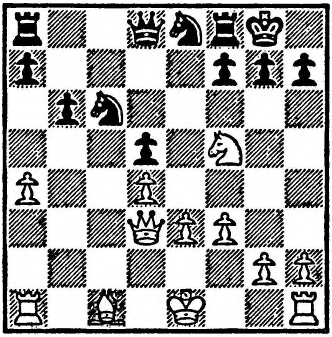
8 N-K2	. . .

Obviously 8 PxKP, NxP is good for Black.

8 . . .	P-K5
9 B-N1	P-QN3
10 N-N3	B-R3
11 P-B3	. . .

Hoping, perhaps, for 11 . . . PxP; 12 PxP, BxP; 13 N-B5, 0-0; 14 R-N1, with a dangerous attack for the pawn. Tal wisely declines the sacrifice.

11 . . .	BxP
12 N-B5	O-O
13 N-Q6	B-Q6!
14 BxB	PxB
15 QxP	PxP
16 BPxP	N-K1
17 N-B5	P-Q4
18 P-QR4	. . .

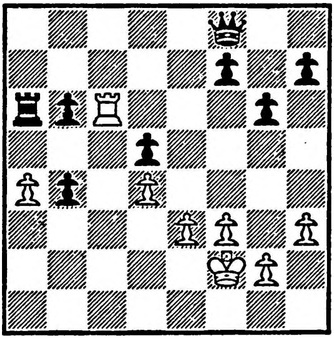


Spassky must originally have thought this move much more powerful than in fact it is; Tal now finds an ingenious tactical resource by which to parry the obvious threat of 19 B-R3.

18 . . .	N-Q3!
19 NxN	. . .

Tal's point is that after 19 B-R3, NxN!; 20 BxR, Q-N4, he has a winning attack: 21 B-R3, NxKP; 22 K-B2, QxPch!; 23 KxN, QR-K1ch; 24 K-B4, P-KR3!; 24 QR-QN1, P-N4ch; 25 K-B5, NxPch!; 26 QxN, QxPch; etc. With the text move, however, White still retains a slight edge.

19 . . .	QxN
20 B-R3	N-N5
21 Q-N3	P-QR4
22 O-O	KR-B1
23 QR-B1	Q-K3
24 BxN	PxB
25 K-B2	Q-Q3
26 P-R3	K-B1
27 R-B2	RxR
28 QxR	P-N3
29 R-B1	Q-Q2
30 Q-B6	QxQ
31 RxQ	R-R3!



White has retained a slight advantage into the endgame, because of his sounder pawn structure and more active Rook. Tal's last move, however, demonstrates that his tactical ingenuity is far from exhausted: if now 32 R-Q6?, Black wins by 32 . . . P-N6; 33 RxP, R-R4; 34 R-Q6, P-QN4!.

32 P-R5	P-N6
33 PxP	P-N7
34 P-N7	P-N8/Q
35 R-B8ch	K-N2
36 P-N8/Q	R-R7ch
37 K-N3	Q-K8ch
38 K-R2	QxP
39 R-N8ch	K-B3
40 Q-Q6ch	Q-K3

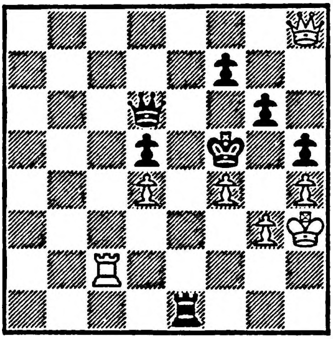
The game was adjourned here; it is plain that White's winning chances have all but evaporated. Some years later in an interview with the English master Bruce Cafferty (published in Cafferty's book *Spassky's 100 Best Games*) Spassky told of the circumstances under which play was resumed on the following day:

> The game was adjourned, and I had a good position; but I was very tired from analysing, and went to resume next morning unshaven. Before I played important games I usually tried to bathe, to put on a very good shirt and suit, and in general to look *comme il faut.* But on this occasion I had analysed incessantly and came to the board looking very dishevelled and fatigued. Then I was like a stubborn mule. I remember that Tal offered me a draw, but I refused. When I resigned, there was a thunder of applause but I was in a daze and hardly understood what was happening. I was certain the world went down; I felt there was something terribly wrong. After this game I went on the street and cried like a child.

Play continued:

41 Q-B4ch	Q-B4
42 Q-Q6ch	Q-K3
43 Q-N3	Q-K6
44 P-R4	R-K7
45 Q-Q6ch	Q-K3
46 Q-B4ch	Q-B4
47 Q-R6	K-K2
48 Q-B8ch	K-B3
49 Q-N7ch	K-K2
50 R-QR8	Q-Q2

51	Q-B8ch	K-B3
52	R-R6ch	R-K3
53	Q-R8ch	K-K2
54	R-R8	R-K8
55	K-N3	P-R4
56	K-B2	R-K3
57	R-QB8	R-Q3
58	Q-B8ch	K-B3
59	R-K8	R-K3
60	Q-R8ch	K-B4
61	Q-R6	K-B3
62	Q-R8ch	K-B4
63	R-Q8	Q-B3
64	R-QB8	Q-R3
65	K-N3	Q-Q3ch
66	K-R3	R-K8
67	P-N3	R-KN8
68	P-B4	R-K8
69	R-B2?	. . .



It is scarcely necessary to remark that this game might well have been included in the chapter called "Blunders." In this situation, of course, it is difficult to criticize Spassky very severely; a draw would have done him no good at all. In any case, Black already stands slightly better. White might try 68 . . . R-K8 or 68 . . . Q-N8.

69 . . . Q-K3!

Threatening both 70 . . . R-R8ch; 71 K-N2, Q-K5ch; and 70 . . . K-K5ch.

70 R-B2 . . .

Or 70 Q-QB8 QxQ 71 RxQ R-Q8, with a won ending for Black.

70 . . .	**R-R8ch**
71 K-N2	**Q-K5ch**
72 R-B3	**K-N5**
73 Q-B8ch	**P-B4**
Resigns	

IX

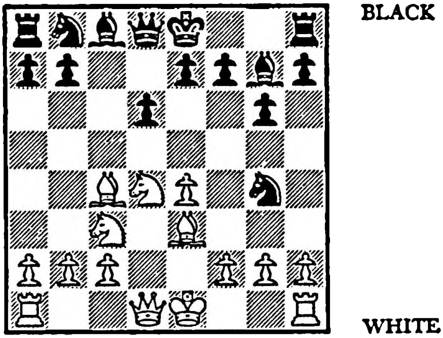
The Lighter Side

Several years ago I was playing in one of those large weekend tournaments which, in those days, were my favorite recreation. As it was my opponent's turn to move I was strolling round the tournament hall, glancing now and again at the other games in progress. I approached one of the top boards where two of my friends were playing each other, and noticed that one of them, a friendly, cheerful, but wildly eccentric young man who has since become one of the top players in the country, was deep in thought, mugging it up with even more than his accustomed intensity. I went over, studied the position, and discovered that the following moves had been made:

SICILIAN DEFENSE

1	P-K4	P-QB4
2	N-KB3	P-Q3
3	P-Q4	PxP
4	NxP	N-KB3

5	N-QB3	P-KN3
6	B-QB4	B-N2
7	B-K3	N-KN5!?



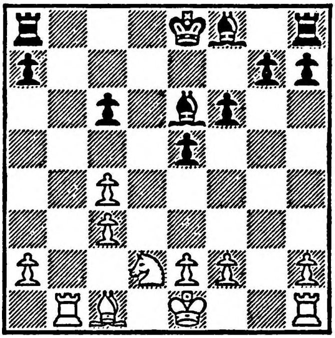
Black's last move is an idea attributed to Botvinnik: he intends to answer *8 B-N5ch* with *8 . . . K-B1* (of course not 8 . . . B-Q2??; 9 QxN), and considers that the acquisition of the two Bishops will offer sufficient compensation for the awkward position of his King.

This is the position that my eccentric friend, who had the White pieces, was staring at. I went back to my own board, made a move, and returned: he was still staring. Finally, after about forty-five minutes in all, he made his move (8 0-0?!?), got up from the table, and, spotting me, came over. "It's an amazing position," he whispered. "If I check him, he just castles."

I stared at him. He has a bizarre sense of humor, but is not given to leg-pulling, and his face revealed nothing but earnest bewilderment. "If I play 8 B-N5ch," he repeated, "he just castles, and I have nothing. I can't figure out where I went wrong."

When I told him, very quietly and a little tentatively, as I was still not sure that I wasn't being had, that it is illegal to castle out of check, he slapped his forehead, groaned, and walked away; he played the rest of the game abominably, and lost in due course.

I know of only one incident even remotely parallel of a strong player forgetting the rules of the game in the heat of battle, and it happened to a grandmaster. During his tour of Australia in the fall of 1960 Soviet grandmaster Yuri Averbach paused for an exhibition game against many-time Australian champion C. J. S. Purdy. The following position arose with Purdy (Black) to move:



PURDY

AVERBACH

Purdy castled, and Averbach protested that the move was illegal, as Black's Rook had crossed a square under attack by one of White's pieces. Purdy, who must have felt much as I did in the episode recounted above, patiently explained to the distinguished visitor that this restriction applied only to the King. "Only the King—not the Rook?" cried Averbach in amazement.

Chess is indeed a hard game.

—D.D.

There is something about chess which makes it of all games the least adaptable to communal effort. True, forms of partnership chess have been tried on occasion: 'tandem,' in which two players on each side move alternately, without conferring, and 'consultation,' in which two or more players on each side talk over the moves before they make them. But neither form has proven very popular, and there has never been an organized competition in either.

This is probably because the real attraction of chess is the opportunity it affords to each player for individual expression, and to become the master of his fate. For a man's chess moves, the responsibility is his alone: if he plays brilliantly and wins the honor is wholly his, and if he plays stupidly and loses, it is nobody's fault but his own. To what extent this feeling is justified does not matter—every serious chessplayer shares it, and to introduce a partnership element is to strike at something fundamental to the enjoyment of the game.

The extent to which individuality of expression will assert itself in chess is well illustrated by a story Edward Lasker tells in his delightful book of reminiscences *Chess Secrets I Learned From the Masters*. Lasker was to give an exhibition of simultaneous play at a club in Paris where there were many more people who wanted to participate than there were places available, "and so," he recounts,

> I agreed to play 36 groups of consulting players, each group consisting of six or seven players. Naturally the pieces were not supposed to be moved by the players while I was away from their board. But I had not reckoned with the French temperament. I had hardly made more than five or six rounds when, to my amazement, I found that I faced nothing but end games. On every board wild arguments took place among the consulting players, each grabbing a piece and trying to demonstrate the superiority of his plan, with the result that by the time I returned to the board practically all pieces had been exchanged. My protestations that it took more time to reconstruct each game than to actually play it were in vain. Thus it took three times as long to finish the performance as I had anticipated.

The idea that in chess, as indeed in anything else, two—or more—heads are better than one is ingenuous, to say the least. Perhaps the most drastic example to the contrary is the following game, played by Alekhine in an exhibition in Majorca in January, 1935 against *four* opponents in consultation. Alekhine later criticized Black's seventh move as "slightly premature."

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

	White Alekhine	*Black* Consultants
1	P-K4	P-QB3
2	P-Q4	P-Q4
3	N-QB3	PxP
4	NxP	N-B3
5	B-Q3	QxP
6	N-KB3	Q-Q1
7	Q-K2	QN-Q2
8	N-Q6 mate	

Despite this discouraging precedent, consultation games continue to be played on occasion. The most elaborate in the history of chess were conducted in 1970 in the Soviet Union, through the medium of a popular newspaper for young people. No fewer that 50,000 selected readers were invited to play two games against the then world champion Boris Spassky; the readers sent in their moves by mail, and at each turn the one that received the greatest endorsement was selected.

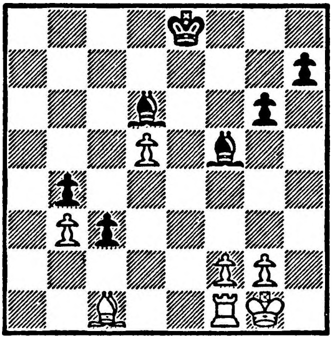
The system (which has been tried before, but never with such enthusiastic response) worked very well: the readers drew one game and played well in the other—up to a point. That point was White's 33rd move, the point of which seems to be that 50,000 heads are not necessarily better than one.

BENONI DEFENSE

	White 50,000 'Consultants'	*Black* Spassky
1	P-Q4	N-KB3
2	P-QB4	P-B4
3	P-Q5	P-K3
4	N-QB3	PxP

White 50,000 'Consultants'	*Black* Spassky
5 PxP	P-Q3
6 P-K4	P-KN3
7 B-Q3	B-N2
8 KN-K2	O-O
9 O-O	N-R3
10 B-KN5	R-K1
11 Q-Q2	B-Q2
12 N-N3	R-QB1
13 QR-K1	P-B5
14 B-N1	P-N4
15 Q-B4	P-N5
16 QxP	Q-N3
17 QxQ	PxQ
18 P-K5	N-N5

White 50,000 'Consultants'	*Black* Spassky
19 QN-K4	BxP
20 P-KR3	P-B3
21 B-B1	P-B4
22 PxN	PxN
23 NxP	QBxP
24 P-QN3	P-B6
25 B-Q3	N-B4
26 NxN	PxN
27 B-QN5	K-B2
28 BxRch	RxB
29 P-R3	B-B4
30 PxP	PxP
31 R-K3	B-Q3
32 RxR	KxR



33 B-K3??	. . .

With 33 R-K1ch K-Q2 34 R-K2 the 50,000 young players could have saved their QNP and probably drawn the game. Now their task is hopeless.

. . .	B-B7
34 R-R1	BxP

35 R-R6	K-K2
36 B-N5ch	K-Q2
37 R-R7ch	K-B1
38 R-R6	K-B2
39 R-R7ch	K-N3
40 B-K3ch	B-B4
41 P-Q6	BxB
42 PxB	P-B7
43 R-QB7	B-R5
Resigns	

The ingenuity exhibited by chessmasters in extricating themselves from seemingly impossible situations is rightly admired. There is a story told of Yugoslav grandmaster Miro Udovchich that illustrates the heights to which the creative mind can ascend under the stimulus of extreme adversity. Udovchich had agreed to give an exhibition of simultaneous blindfold play[*] in a small village in the back country of Yugoslavia. When he arrived he saw that, as he had hoped, he was to face ten very weak opponents (there wasn't a player of note living in the entire region), and so he settled down into his chair in hopes of a pleasant evening.

As in simultaneous blindfold play it is important for the exhibitor that the games take different courses rather quickly so that he can distinguish them in his mind, Udovchich made several different opening moves on the various boards, and was surprised when each of his opponents replied with the move 1 . . . P-QN3. He made various second moves, to which five of his opponents replied 2 . . . B-N2, and the other five 2 . . . B-R3. In growing consternation, the grandmaster tried radically different third moves, in the vain hope that they would enable him to keep track of which game was which. Those of his adversaries who had played 2 . . . B-N2 now played 3 . . . B-R3; those who had played 2 . . . B-R3 played 3 . . . B-B1.

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[*] That is, the single player conducts several games at once without sight of any of the boards. He usually sits off to one side of the room with his face to the wall, and his opponents' moves are announced to him by a referee. When their opponents play fair, some chessmasters are capable of prodigious feats of blindfold play. Progress in this form of the game has been as marked as in any other over the past few centuries: when in 1744 the Frenchman Philidor played two blindfold games simultaneously, his accomplishment was considered almost superhuman; in 1962 Janos Flesch of Hungary established a new world's record by playing fifty-two games at once without sight of the board.

Udovchich was now in a hopeless muddle, completely unable to remember which of the ten curious positions he had floating around in his head belonged to which board. It was at this moment that his renowned ingenuity came to the fore: he excused himself to go to the toilet, found an open window therein, climbed out of it, and set forth at top speed on the road back to Zagreb. The organizers of the exhibition were understandably indignant, and complained bitterly to the Yugoslav Chess Federation of the grandmaster's defection. No one who has ever attempted blindfold simultaneous play, however, will regard Udovchich's escape as anything other than a brilliant solution to a seemingly insoluble problem of strategy.

Grandmasters are not the only ones who have felt the need to leave a game in the lurch. Witness the following dispatch from an August 1974 edition of *The New York Times:*

ESCAPE ENDS CHESS MATCH

BONEY HAY, England (Canadian Press)—After two years of play by post, a transatlantic chess game between a local resident, John Walker, and a convicted murderer, Claude Bloodgood of Virginia State Penitentiary, ended abruptly. Mr. Bloodgood escaped custody while being taken to a chess tournament.

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